REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

ANKARA UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL

SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS

SCIENCES (HISTORY OF RELIGIONS)

THE FORMATION PROCESS OF THE BASIC BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE NESTURIAN CHURCH (VI- XIII. CENTURIES)

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Yasar KAPLAN

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T.C.

ANKARA UNIVERSITY

Directorate of the Institute of Social Sciences,

Prof. Dr. Ahmet Hikmet EROĞLU, I declare that all the information in my doctoral thesis titled "The Formation Process of the Basic Beliefs and Practices of the Nesturi Church, VI- XIII. Centuries (Ankara 2020)", which I prepared under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Ahmet Hikmet EROĞLU, has been collected and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical behavior principles, that I have fully cited the information I have received from other sources in the text and bibliography, that I have acted in accordance with the rules of scientific research and ethics during the study process, and that I will accept any legal consequences if the contrary occurs.

Date: 18/03/2021

Yaşar KAPLAN

PREFACE

Christianity, which is considered to be the religion with the largest number of adherents among the living religions, carried out mission activities to the east of the Euphrates, which was under the rule of the Parthian and Sassanid Empires from the early periods of its history, and began to spread in Southeastern Anatolia, Syria, Mesopotamia and Iran. It spread among various communities in this region, especially among the widespread Assyrian/Aramaic communities. Christians have experienced many conflicts throughout history and these conflicts have led to the emergence of many sects. One of the sects that emerged as a result of these divisions is the Eastern Church, or Nestorian Church as it is commonly called, which is considered among the early Eastern Churches. The Eastern Christians, who lived unaware of the councils organized by the Christians under Roman rule and away from the conflicts until the Vth century, came under the influence of the theological and Christological debates in Rome as of this period. Following the debates between Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople, and Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, about the nature of Jesus Christ and the position of Mary, the Assyrian/Aramaic Christians living on both sides of the border were divided into those who adopted monophysite and diophysite views. The Christians in the Iranian area who adopted the diophysite view were ostracized by both their Roman compatriots who adopted the monophysite view and the dominant Christian understanding of the Roman Empire and were called Nestorians. Thus, from the end of the V century, the Eastern Church continued to develop on its own independent course, separate from the mainstream Christian world. The Eastern Church, which had the opportunity to spread over a wide area with its successful missionary activities in Central Asia, China and India, participated effectively in socio-cultural life under Islamic rule and was seen as the closest Christian group to Islam.

Our study consists of an introduction and three main chapters. The first chapter covers the historical development of the Eastern Church from the spread of Christianity to the eastern regions until the beginning of the fourteenth century. The second part deals with the theological and christological views of the Church during this historical period. The third part covers worship and religious practices.

I would like to thank my advisor Prof. Dr. Ahmet Hikmet Eroğlu, who contributed a great deal to the emergence of this study. I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Ali İsra Güngör, Prof. Dr. Eyüp Baş, Prof. Dr. Kadir Albayrak, Prof. Dr. Ramazan Adıbelli, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yasin Meral and Dr. Lecturer Şevket Özcan who contributed to this study with their valuable criticisms. I am grateful to Prof. Dr. Şevket Özcan. Likewise, within the framework of the "Overseas Research Fellowship Program", I am grateful to TUBITAK, which enabled us to work on our thesis topic at the University of Cambridge in England during 2019, and to my advisor Prof. Dr. Geoffrey Khan, an expert in Semitic languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic) at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge, who hosted us there. I would like to express my gratitude to my dear friend Mustafa Ongan, who did not spare any help during our stay in Cambridge, and to my friend Lawrence Nadir Mikho, a member of the Assyrian Church of the East, who patiently answered our questions. I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Davut Eşit, Dr. Lecturer Saim Gündoğan, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Davut Eşit, Prof. Dr. Saim Gündoğan, Lecturer. Prof. Dr. Davut Eşit, Assoc. Murat Adıyaman and Research Assist. Hayrullah Engin, as well as Dr. Ergin Öpengin and Assist. Assist. Yusuf Tekin for their kindness in revising some translations. Last but not least, I would like to thank my beloved wife, who has been both a mother and a father to my children, whom I neglected during my thesis study, and who has always been by my side.

Yasar KAPLAN

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMS : Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum
ANF03 : Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume III
See : See
CHRC : Church History and Religious Culture
CSCO : Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSS : Collected Studies Series
Translation. : Translator
DOP : Dumbarton Oaks Papers
ed. : Editor
ECR : Eastern Churches Review
GEDSH : The Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage
Haz. : Prepared by
BC. : BC
MS. : After Christ
NPNF2-01 : Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II, Volume I
NPNF2-03 : Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II, Volume 3
NPNF2-13 : Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II, Volume 13
Nşr. : Published by
OCA : Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCP : Orientalia Christiana Perodica
ö. : Death
SSS : Studies in Syriac Spirituality
STYGA : Late Antiquity in Syriac Historiography; Christianity, Islam, Politics History
Tah. : Tahkik
Ter. : Translation
DIA : Turkish Religious Foundation Encyclopedia of Islam
etc. : And so on
et al. : And others
vol. : Volume
y. : Approximately
Yay. : Publications
yy. : Century

INTRODUCTION

A. SUBJECT, IMPORTANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Syriac Christianity and its tradition is one of the topics that has attracted the attention of Western scholars for the last three hundred years and has been the subject of intensive research in the study of Christian religious tradition. Syriac Christianity is a topic of interest for a number of reasons. First of all, Syriac, being a dialect of Aramaic spoken by Jesus Christ, represents the heritage of the Semitic world in which Christianity was born. Early Syriac literature is highly significant as it reflects the background of early Christianity and the thought of the Jewish community in Palestine in the first century and before. This cultural heritage of Syriac Christianity has been preserved more by the Nestorian Church (Eastern Church)[1] , which is considered by some scholars to be the oldest church after the churches of Jerusalem and Antioch. The fact that the Eastern Church was located outside the borders of the Roman Empire, had a unique church hierarchy and continued its development under the rule of non-Christian governments gives clues about its unique historical development and doctrine.

The Church of the East cannot be associated only with the Christian world since it is Eastern, operates in Eastern societies and has spent most of its history with Muslim societies. The relationship between the Muslim world and the Church of the East began as soon as Islam emerged and began to spread. As a result of the relationship they established with the Christians belonging to the Eastern Church, the most populous and influential Christian community they lived with, Muslim societies first began to learn about the Christian world. The scholars of the Eastern Church, which is the product of a deep-rooted and rich religious, social, cultural and historical accumulation

[1] Jean Maurice Fiey, "The Spread of the Persian Church", *Syriac Dialogue: First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition*, (Vienna: 1994), 97.

They engaged in intellectual discussions with Muslim scholars and made various contributions to Islamic culture and civilization. Especially during the Abbasid period, they played a leading role in translation activities and pioneered the translation of Greek philosophy and culture into Arabic and from there into European languages.

Although the Nestorian Church had a favorable image in the Islamic world compared to other Christian churches, it was considered heretical in the Christian world for a long time. This can be roughly attributed to two reasons. The first of these stems from the position assigned to Nestorius. Nestorius was accused of adopting a two-person Christology in the person of Christ, and was excommunicated, exiled and his works destroyed in Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451) and many other ecumenical councils. Until the Syriac translation of Nestorius' work was unearthed in the late nineteenth century, his views were limited to those transmitted by his opponents. This made it difficult to obtain reliable information about Nestorius' views. The second important reason is that since early times in the Christian world, almost all works on church history have focused mainly on the history of the church within the Roman Empire. As a natural consequence of this situation, the history of the church outside the borders of the Roman Empire has been ignored and the marginalization of this church history has become a tendency. The Eastern Church maintained a negative image in the rest of the Christian world for a long time, both because it was geographically outside the borders of the Roman Empire and because it was associated with Nestorius, who was excommunicated as a heretic. Considering all this, it is clear that any study of the early Nestorian Church is fraught with many difficulties. At the same time, this situation brings with it the necessity of a rigorous reading of the Nestorian Church based on reliable data.

The religious tradition of such a community, which is one of the deep-rooted churches of the Christian world and also has a significant contribution to the culture and civilization of the Islamic world, needs to be researched to the extent it deserves. This community, which is commonly known as Nestorians in Turkey, has been the subject of academic studies in two different ways: from the history of religions and from a socio-political perspective. Considering the studies on the Western Assyrians/Yaqubis in our country, studies on Nestorians from the perspective of the history of religions have been quite limited. On the other hand, there have been many studies on the socio-political situation and history of Nestorians in the nineteenth century. Although these studies on Nestorians provide brief information about the Nestorian religious tradition, they mainly focus on Nestorian relations with missionaries, the Ottoman Empire and the Kurds. In these studies, the Eastern Church is generally discussed only in the context of Nestorius (d. 453) and some important issues regarding the Nestorian Church are ignored. First of all, Nestorius was not the theoretician of the christological views attributed to him, but he articulated the christological views of Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428) who preceded him. Secondly, Nestorius was virtually unrecognized by the Eastern Church during his lifetime. His work reached the Eastern Church in 540 and was translated into Syriac. In this case, his views reached the Eastern Church about a century after his death and half a century after the two synods (484 and 486) in which the Eastern Church allegedly adopted "Nestorian" views. In this respect, considering the Eastern Church only in the context of Nestorius leads to ignoring the long history of the Eastern Church tradition before and after that date, as well as other very important theologians. Therefore, it is not possible to analyze the basic beliefs and religious practices of the Eastern Church only through the ideas attributed to Nestorius. For this, the theological teachings, christological views and religious

What their practices are must be established from the relevant ecclesiastical tradition itself and from the works of theologians belonging to that tradition.

It is possible to list the hypotheses and research problems that guide our study titled "The Formation Process of the Basic Beliefs and Practices of the Nestorian Church (VI-XIII Centuries)" as follows:

- Before Nestorius, or before it was called Nestorian, the Eastern Church completed its church hierarchy with religious institutionalization and was formed as an independent church.
- The diophysite understanding of the Eastern Church cannot be explained only by the Antiochian diophysite tradition. The deep-rooted diophysite character of the early Syriac tradition was instrumental in the Eastern Church's positioning in the christological debates on the side of the Antiochian diophysite tradition and against the Alexandrian monophysite tradition.
- There is no direct relationship between the Eastern Church and Nestorius. Nestorius had a limited influence on the Eastern Church's distinctive view of Christology and the position of Mary.
- Although the diophysite understanding of the Eastern Church is based on deep disagreements with the monophysite understanding, the disagreements between the Eastern Church and the Greco-Roman churches of the Council of Chalcedon, both of which hold a diophysite view, are mainly based on political disputes.
- The fact that the Eastern Church has historically lived under the rule of foreign governments, such as the Sassanids, dominated by the Magian religious tradition, and the Muslim states dominated by Islam, has had a positive impact on its unique historical development and doctrine.
- According to the Nestorian Church, what is the content of basic theological issues such as divinity, incarnation, creation, original sin and life after death? What are their similarities and differences with other Christian churches?

- How has the Nestorian Church's church structure, understanding of sacraments, liturgy, church calendar and daily worship evolved? What are the similarities and differences with other Christian churches?

In the context of the research problems listed above, the following objectives are planned to be achieved throughout our study: To reveal the process of the spread of Christianity to the East, the formation of the church hierarchy and the formation of an independent church. To identify the common heritage of Syriac/Aramaic-speaking Christians on both sides of the Roman and Parthian/Sasanian borders before the cryptological debates in the Roman Empire in the V century. To determine the reflections of the cryptological debates between Nestorius and Cyril and the developments that took place in the Roman Empire from the Council of Ephesus (431) to the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) on the Eastern Church in Iran and the attitude taken by this church. To show the theological principles and distinctive features of the Eastern Church by shedding light on the theological development and changes it has undergone in the historical process. To reveal the extent of Nestorius' relationship with the Eastern Church. To identify the theologians of the Eastern Church and their contributions to the formation of the basic beliefs of the Church by making their views visible. To describe the process of the formation and development of the religious practices of this church based on the tradition of the Eastern Church.

Our study deals with the historical development of the Eastern Church from its beginnings until the eighteenth century, together with the basic theological principles and religious practices of this church and the process of their formation. The study of the Church's history, theology and religious practices not only makes the development of complex phenomena comprehensible, but also provides a holistic perspective on the Eastern Church. A wide range of literature has been used as a source throughout the study. The Eastern Church is not only dealt with in the context of Nestorius and his views, but also the synods of the Eastern Church and the works of many theologians belonging to this tradition are utilized.

in such a way that their contributions to the Eastern Church are revealed. Thus, many theologians belonging to the Eastern Church and their contributions to the Eastern Church are revealed through descriptive evaluations of their views. The points mentioned here give our study an original character.

B. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

It may be noticed that the subject of our study covers a long period of time and the breadth of the issues addressed. However, this situation has been consciously chosen due to both the importance of the subject and the need to provide a holistic perspective and detailed information on the subject. In this respect, we have endeavored to finalize our study as we had decided, despite the difficulties encountered with the breadth of the study. One of the important issues related to the study is the language issue. As is known, Syriac has a large religious literature. While a significant part of this literature has been translated into various languages, some of it is still preserved in its original Syriac. In this study, English and Arabic translations of Syriac works, especially on basic beliefs and religious practices, were utilized. In addition, some clergymen of the Assyrian Church of the East or scholarly works that provide information about these works were utilized for some of the source works whose translations from Syriac could not be found. Some important information in some Syriac source works translated into French and German was accessed with the help of some friends who are fluent in French and German. However, it should be noted that the use of such sources is very limited. In addition, some important works translated from Syriac into Latin are mentioned in a footnote in order to provide information about them.

C. NAMING PROBLEM

The church we are studying has traditionally called itself the "Church of the East". This term is used only in the eastern part of the Roman Empire.

The term "Persian Church" is not related to the Christian communities in the region, but to the church that was formed and continued its development outside the borders of Rome under Parthian-Sassanid and later Muslim rule. Apart from this term, the name "Persian Church" was also used from early times. These two terms indicate the existence of a church that was both geographically and politically separate from the Roman Empire.[2] However, in the V. and

As a result of the Christological debates in the VIth century, they began to be called "Nestorians" or "Nestorian Church" by their opponents. The name "Nestorian" was used for the first time for those who adhered to the views of Nestorius, who is claimed to have held the view that "in the Incarnate Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Mary represent two distinct persons", independently of the church in Iran. The first person to use the name Nestorian for the church in Iran was Shem'un of Beth Arsham (d. before 548), who held monophysite views. According to him, just as the followers of Marcion or Eutyches were called Marcionites and Eutychians because of their heresies, the name Nesturi should be used for those who held the views of Nestorius. Shem "un states that Nestorius and his followers were excommunicated at the First Council of Ephesus (431), that they were called Nestorians ever since, and that they separated themselves from the Nestorians from the twenty-seventh year of the reign of the Sassanid ruler Piroz (459-484).[3] From this period until today, the term "Nestorian Church" has been used for the Eastern Church. This church, which has never officially defined itself as the "Nestorian Church", has shown two types of reactions to this designation. In general, and especially during periods of rapprochement with other churches, it rejected this nomenclature at the highest level. Abdullah b. Tayyib (d. 1043), one of the most important theologians of the Eastern Church, wrote that the Eastern Christians (Nasara al-Mashrik) derived their faith from the Apostles Addai and Thomas.

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[2] Yusuf Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik* (Beirut: Center al-Aqadimi li al-Abhas, 2013), 50-51.

[3] For the letter of Shem "un of Beth Arsham, see Simeon of Beth Arsham, "Letter on Bar Ṣawmā and the heresy of the Nestorians", Translated by Aaron Michael Butts, *Academia* (Accessed January 21, 2019).

He states that it is wrong to use the name Nestorian for them, since they received the name Nestorian.[4] Another important theologian, Mar "Abdisho" bar Brikha (d. 1318), in his account of the divisions after the Christological controversies, states that the Christian world was divided into three: the followers of Cyril (the Jacobites) who confessed one nature and one qnoma* (uknum/hypostasis) in Christ, the followers of the Council of Chalcedon (the Melkites) who accepted the doctrine of two natures and one knoma, and those who confessed that there were two natures and two knomas, a son, a will and an authority in Christ (the Eastern Church). According to him, the Eastern Church is called Nestorian. According to him, the Easterners (Eastern Church) are unjustly called Nestorians because they never changed their true beliefs and kept them as they received them from the apostles. For Nestorius was not their patriarch, nor did they know his language. When they heard Nestorius teach that in Christ there are two natures, two knomas, one will, one Son of God, one Christ, they witnessed his acceptance of the orthodox faith which they themselves had adopted. They did not adhere to Nestorius, but to the doctrine to which Nestorius also adhered. According to "Abdisho", when they were called upon to excommunicate Nestorius, especially in the matter of the "Mother of Christ", they refused because they saw no difference between the excommunication of Nestorius and the excommunication of the holy books and the holy apostles, from which they had taken their faith. According to him, this is the belief that they were condemned along with Nestorius.[5] However, at times, especially in times of hostility with other churches, they sometimes embraced the Nestorian nomenclature. For example, in 612, in the presence of the Sassanid ruler Khusraw II (d. 628), his opponents, the Monophysites and the Henanites[6]

---

[4] Michael F. Kuhn, *Defending Divine Unity in the Muslim Milieu: the Trinitarian and Christological Formulations of Abu al-Faraj "Abd Allah Ibn al-Tayyib and Iliyya of Nisibis*, (London: Middlesex University, PhD Thesis, 2017), 166.

* The term qnoma (plural qnome), which is an extremely important technical term for the Eastern Church's understanding of Christology, will hereafter be referred to as knoma.

[5] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar, Hülasetun Lahutiyya*, translated from Syriac into Arabic. Lois Sako (PDF: Karozota.com, 1978), 16.

[6] The Henanites are a movement within the Eastern Church attributed to Henana of Erbilli, who was the director of the Nusaybin School from 571-610. He was known as a follower of Origen and a supporter of

the Council of Chalcedon (451), which rejected the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia. It was implicitly rejected by the Eastern Church at various synods between 585 and 612. Christology and the Bible

In their discussion with the Eastern Church delagation, they affirmed that they were Nestorians and followed the Christological doctrine of Nestorius.[7] Again, in the middle of the VIIIth century, Shahdost, bishop of Tirhan, a member of the Eastern Church, when asked why they had left the West and were called Nestorians, gave the following answer:

> "It is quite clear that we are not the ones who have departed from the essentials of the faith. We orthodoxly believe that there are two natures and two hypostasis (knoma) in Christ. But Severus [of Antioch] and his disciples departed from this and confessed that there is one nature and one hypostasis in Christ. We, Nestorian Christians, cry out with John the Evangelist: "The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us."[8]

Badger, who visited the Nestorian Christians of the Hakkâri region in the nineteenth century, reports that the Christians of the region freely used the term "Nesturi" (Nestoraya) for themselves.[9] It is clear from these statements that the Eastern Church has never officially used the Nestorian nomenclature throughout history, but in practice it has affirmed it. Historically used to stigmatize anyone who advocated a strict diophysite position, the term "Nestorian" was found offensive by its opponents because of the negative connotation that the Eastern Church advocated a "two-person" Christology. If one were to characterize the Eastern Church by a name, it would make more sense to call it "Theodorian" in reference to the name of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was considered the greatest authority by the Church, rather than Nestorius.[10]

He caused a serious internal tension in the Eastern Church because of the way he thought about interpretation. The majority of the school's students protested against him and left the school. His influence in the Church remained for a long time. Jeff W. Childers, "Henana", in *The Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage (GEDSH)*, edited by Sebastian P. Brock, Aaron M. Butts, George A. Kiraz and Lucas Van Rompay (New Jersey: Gorgias Press, Beth Mardutho: The Syriac Institute, 2011), 194.

[7] *Synodicon Orientale ou Recueil de Synodes Nestoriens*, Publié, Traduit et Annoté: Jean Baptiste Chabot (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1902), 574, 591.

[8] Luise Abramowski - Alan E. Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 2/31.

[9] George Percy Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals* (London: Joseph Masters, 1852), 1/223-224.

[10] Sebastian P. Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Nomenclature to be Met with Regret", in *Introduction to Christology, Miaphysite, Dyophysite and Chalcedonian Understandings*, ed. and trans. Zafer Duygu - Kutlu Akalın (Istanbul: Divan Kitap, 2018), 104.

The church, which continued the tradition of the Church of the East, experienced a new split in 1968 due to the decision to switch to the Gregorian calendar in 1964, and a new church was founded by Mar Toma Darmo (d. 1968) under the name "Ancient Church of the East". The remaining majority began to use the name "Assyrian Church of the East" under the leadership of Patriarch Mar Denha IV, elected after Patriarch Mar Eshai Shem "un (1920-1975).[11] The emphasis on the "Assyrian" here leads to the need for a brief explanation of the ethnic existence and self-identification of the traditional Church of the East. Before the emergence of nationalism in the modern sense, religion was the determining factor of nationality. During the Sassanid period, it is possible to say that religious and national ("amma) identities intersected in the self-identification of the Christian communities in Iran. They often used the biblical expression "People of God" to describe themselves. For them, the world was not divided between Rome (Rhomaye) and Persia (Persaye), but between the "People of God" and the "Barraye/Hanpe" (Pagans).[12] Christians belonging to the Eastern Church generally used the term "Msihaye" (Christian) to indicate their religious identity.

In addition to the term "Msihaye", in the martyrdom narratives known as "Martyrdom Literature"[13] in the Eastern Christian tradition and first compiled by Mar Aha (410-415) and Marutha, Bishop of Meyafarkin in the early V century, it is known that the Sassanid authorities used the term "Nasraye" for Syriac/Aramaic speaking Christians. It is also known that the Zoroastrian cleric Kartir wrote the Naqshi

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[11] Sebastian P. Brock - James F. Coakley, "Church of the East", *GEDSH*, 99-100; Muwaffiq Nisko, *al-Assyrians, Ismu "l-Haqiqi li "l-Arāmiyyin wa "l-Ashūriyyin wa "l-Kildān* (Beirut: Bisan li "n-Neşri wa "t-Tawzii" wa "l-"Ilam, 2012), 37-38.

[12] Sebastian P. Brock, "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties", *Studies in Church History*" 18 (1982), 12-13, 15.

[13] For martyr compilations, see Paul Bedjan, *AMS*, 7 vols.; S. E. Assemani, *Acta Sanctorum Martyrum Orientalium*, 2 vols. (Rome: Joseph Collins, 1748); P. Peters (ed.), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis* (Bruxelles: Society of Bollandists, 1910); Sebastian P. Brock - Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 63-99; Sebastian P. Brock, *The History of the Holy Mar Ma "in with a Guide to the Persian Martyr Acts* (New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2008), 14-59. For the list of martyr compilations of the Shapur II period, see ibid. 78-82. For the martyrdom compilations in Arabic, see Abona, *Shuhedā'u "l-Mashrik*; Adday Shar, *Kitāb Sirat al-Shuhuri Shuhedā'i "l-Mashriki "l-Kaddisin*, 2 volumes (Mosul, 1900-1906).

In addition to this term, the term "Kristyane" (klystd "n) is also used in the Rustam inscriptions. There is much debate about who exactly is meant by the terms "Nasraye" and "Kristyane". Some scholars associate the term "Nasraye" with the Judeo-Christian community, while others associate it with Orthodox Christians. Again, some associate the term "Kristyane" with the Marcionite group, while others think that the term "Nasraye" refers to the Sabians (Mandaeans). Sebastian P. Brock, on the other hand, thinks that these two designations are used for the Christians in the Iranian region, but that these designations point to their different geographical origins and cultural affiliations. According to him, the term "Kristyane" must have been used for the Christians of western origin in the Iranian area.[14] However, it is known that the Marcionite Church also had a significant following among Syriac/Aramaic Christians and they called themselves "Kristyane" in contrast to the mainstream Christians who called themselves "Msihaye".[15]

Christian groups in the Syriac tradition today use the names Assyrian, Aramaic, Chaldean and Assyrian to identify themselves ethnically. Pre-modern Assyrian sources use the terms "Arāmāyā" and "Suryāyā" or a shorter version of "Surāyā" to describe themselves. The Arameans were a people who inhabited the Fertile Crescent around 1100-700 BC, as recorded in Assyrian records. The geographical term "Beth Aramaye" in Syriac sources reflects their presence in Babylon as mentioned in the Assyrian annals. Small Aramaean polities emerged in different parts of what is now Syria around 1000 BC, but were wiped out by the Assyrian Empire within the next two centuries, along with the states of Israel and Judah. Aramaean kings

[14] Sebastian P. Brock, "Some Aspects of Greek Words in Syriac", *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity*, Part IV (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), 91-94; "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties", pp. 3, 6.

[15] Lucas Van Rompay, "Marcion", *GEDSH*, 266-267. It is understood that Marcion and Mani teachings were active among the Eastern Christians during the reign of Mar Aha (410-420) and some Christians joined them and sympathized with their works. Adday Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi: History of the Assyrian Nestorian Church of the East*", trans. Celal Kabadayı (Istanbul: Yaba Publications, 2010), 290.

The Old Testament (Kings and Chronicles) records the wars between Judah and the kings of Judah. In the Peshitta, the Syriac version of the Old Testament, the term "Edomites" is used instead of "Aramaeans". This is because according to the Syriac translators of the time, the Aramaeans lived only east of the Euphrates. On the contrary, in the Syriac version of the New Testament, the term "Aramaean" was used in the sense of "pagan". Over time, however, the term came to be used in two different ways: "Aramaya" in the ethnic sense and "Armaya" to refer to pagans. In the eyes of many Syriac writers, the terms "Aramaya" and "Suryaya" are synonymous. Normally this refers to the language, but sometimes it has been used as an ethnic term.[16] The name Chaldean, on the other hand, is used in Syriac sources mostly for pagans who were interested in astrology.[17] In pre-modern Syriac sources, the terms "Athorāyā" (Assyrian) or "Athor" (Assyrian) were used in two basic senses. First, in its most basic sense, it was used as a geographical term for the ancient Assyrian Empire and its capital Nineveh and its environs. This usage continued until the XXth century. The second important use is as a metaphor for the enemies of Christians as described in the Old Testament. The term "Athorāyā" (Assyrian) has not historically been used by East and West Assyrians of Syriac heritage as a term of ethnic identification, but rather "Arāmāyā" and "Suryāyā" or its shorter version "Surāyā".[18]

In the mid-nineteenth century, western archaeologists, travelers and missionaries operating among the Nestorians began to establish a relationship between Assyrian Christians and the ancient Assyrians. The term "Assyrian Christians" was first used by the British traveler

It is found in the work of C. J. Rich (1787-1821). British traveler A. H. Layard (1817-

1894) made this discourse more popular. In the second half of the XIXth century, the British

[16] Sebastian P. Brock - James F. Coakley, "Arameans", *GEDSH*, 30-31.
[17] Brock, "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties", 17. For extensive information on the Chaldeans, see Kadir Albayrak, *Chaldeans and Nestorians* (Ankara: Vadi Yayınları, 1997), 21-66.
[18] Aaron Michael Butts, "Assyrian Christians", in *A Companion To Assyria*, ed. Eckart Frahm, (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 600-601.

The term Assyrian became systematized when the Archbishop of Canterbury opened a center called "The Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission to Assyrian Christians" to carry out mission activities for Nestorians. It can be assumed that the term Assyrian used by the British was introduced as an alternative to the term Chaldean used by Catholics. Although the term Assyrian gained a place in the vocabulary of Anglicans, it was not used much in the field.[19] From this period onwards, both in relation to the developing ideology of nationalism in the world and the "Assyrian Enlightenment", traditional Christians belonging to the Eastern Church began to embrace it as an important term used in the construction of a national identity that was not based solely on the idea of membership in a religious community.[20] However, the use of the term "Assyrian" can be seen as a consequence of the policies of the western states, especially the British, to unite the Assyrian/Aramaic Christian communities under the umbrella of a single nation despite all their sectarian differences since the nineteenth century. Whereas the members of the Eastern Church ethnically trace themselves to the ancient Assyrians, the Catholic Chaldeans, who had left this church, began to trace themselves to the ancient Chaldeans. The term Assyrian-Kaldo was also used to reconcile the two terms. The Western Assyrians (Syriac Orthodox Church), on the other hand, began to emphasize the Aramaic discourse against the term Assyrian. However, both the tragedy of the First World War and the emergence of a significant Assyrian diaspora as a result of migrations strengthened the Assyrian discourse. Today, this discourse continues to find adherents among Christians of Assyrian origin belonging to different churches.[21]

Throughout history, the Christian world has been plagued by false and negative labels to describe certain churches in the context of accusations of heresy. Recently, however, there have been efforts to bring different churches together in a common ground.

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[19] Butts, "Assyrian Christians", 602.
[20] Brock, "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties", 19.
[21] Butts, "Assyrian Christians", 607.

A new paradigm has emerged in the dialogue efforts carried out for the purpose of dialogue, and this situation has begun to take place in scientific studies. In this context, the term "Nestorian" used for the Eastern Church began to be abandoned. Likewise, the term "Monophysite" used for the members of the Syriac Orthodox Church (Jacobites) began to be abandoned and the term "Moderate Monophysite" or "Miaphysite" began to be used instead. The term "Monophysite" is restricted to those who adhere to the views of Eutyches (d. 454 CE). However, we have not adhered to these new nomenclatures in our study, both because there is no complete consensus on these nomenclatures in the western world and to avoid confusing the readers in Turkey. Although the term "Eastern Church" is used in our study instead of the term "Nestorian", the term "Monophysite" is used for those who adopt the Alexandrian Christology or more specifically for the members of the Syriac Orthodox Church (Jacobites). The terms East Syriacs, Diophysites, Easterners and Nestorians refer to the Eastern Church, while the terms West Syriacs, Monophysites, Severan and Jacobite refer to the Syriac Orthodox Church.

D. METHOD AND SOURCES OF THE RESEARCH

Our study titled "The Formation Process of the Basic Beliefs and Practices of the Nestorian Church (VI-XIII Centuries)" mainly focuses on three subjects. The first one deals with the spread of Christianity to the eastern regions of the Euphrates, the formation of religious institutionalization and church hierarchy, the emergence of the Eastern Church as a separate church, and its historical development under Parthian, Sassanid and Muslim rule. The other two topics, which are the basis of our study, consist of the basic beliefs and practices of the Eastern Church and the process of their formation. The theological principles, worship and rituals of the Eastern Church, which we can call theology or theology of theology, are discussed. In this context, God, trinity,

Theology, Christology, Mariology, the Incarnation, Creation, the afterlife, etc., as well as the sacraments, liturgy, church structure and various forms of worship are emphasized.

In order to reveal the historical development course, basic beliefs and practices of the Eastern Church, it was tried to reach the basic sources related to the church and monastery history of the church, martyrdom narratives and works on the lives of saints, and beliefs and practices written by important theologians and theologians who grew up within the church. After scanning the basic sources and utilizing data collection techniques, scientific studies on church theology and its historical development in the modern period were scanned and the data obtained were tried to be classified in accordance with the descriptive method of the history of religions. The data obtained were subjected to a chronological and phenomenological classification and evaluated in a descriptive style. Accordingly, an attempt has been made to first describe how the phenomenon under consideration was interpreted by Christianity in general and the Syriac tradition in particular, and then to reveal how it was understood by the theologians of the Eastern Church in chronological order. The results obtained in the light of the comparative method of the history of religions have been compared with other Christian denominations in order to reveal their similarities and differences in a general framework without overdoing it.

In order to collect research resources, various libraries in Turkey and databases of various libraries in Turkey and abroad were accessed via the internet. We visited Patriarch Mar Gewargis Sliwa III in Erbil, Iraq, where the patriarchal center of the Assyrian Church of the East is located, met with many clergymen and researchers from the church in Erbil and Duhok, Iraq, and visited various cultural centers and publishing houses of the church. We made personal use of the rich library of the University of Cambridge, where we spent a year as a visiting researcher in England with a TUBITAK scholarship, which houses a vast literature on Assyrian studies. In this context, the East

The source works on the history and basic teachings of the Church are classified into primary and secondary sources.

In studies on the Eastern Church, the main source of information on the historical development, basic doctrines and religious practices of the church is the book containing the minutes of the synods held by the Eastern Church from 410 to 775.

It is the collection called *Ktābā d-Sunhādos* (Book of Synods), compiled in the last quarter of the VIIIth century. This collection, together with its French translation, was published by Jean Baptiste Chabot under the title *Synodicon Orientale ou Recueil de Synodes Nestoriens* (Eastern Synods or Collection of Nestorian Synods) in Paris in 1902 and also translated into German by Oscar Braun and published in Amsterdam in 1900. The synodal decisions, creedal statements and Christological passages preserved in this collection, which are very important for our subject, have been used in English or Arabic translations. The *Acts of Thomas the Apostle*, the *Doctrine of Addai*, and the *Acts of Mari*, anonymous works of early antiquity, which narrate the legendary spread of Christianity east of the Euphrates, are important as they reflect the church tradition's attempt to construct an apostolic origin. These works were published by Paul Bedjan between 1890 and 1897 and later translated into many languages. The *Urhoy Chronicle (540 A.D.), which* is known for the reliability of its information and covers the period between 132 B.C. and 540 A.D. centered in Urfa, was first published with its Latin translation by J. S. Assemani in 1719 in *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementin-Vaticana* (1/387-417). This work was translated into Turkish by Zafer Duygu.

Mar Barhadbshabba "Arbaya, who lived in the late VIth and early VIIth centuries, wrote a work on the history of the schools of Urfa and Nusaybin, which was prepared by Adday Sher and published in Paris in 1908 in *Patrologia Orientales* (4/327-398). This work was translated into Turkish by Celal Demirci under the title The *Purpose of the Establishment of Higher Schools in Mesopotamia*. Sham'un of Beth Arsham, an ardent Monophysite

His letter, which we can translate with the title *Barsauma, Bishop of Nusaybin and the Nestorian Heresy* (VI century), is very important as it depicts the process of the adoption of diophysite Christology in the Iranian field from a dissident point of view. The letter was first published by J. S. Assemani in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* (1/346-358). It was translated into English by Aaron Michael Butts. The *Chronicle of Arbela,* written by Mshiha Zha and containing a history of the Christian communities in Erbil and the surrounding region and the diocese of Erbil between 100-540, was published by Alphonse Mingana under the title *Chronicle of Arbela*. Although the work was considered unreliable by some experts, today most of the material is considered reliable. This work was published in Leipzig in 1908 with a French translation and translated into Turkish by Erol Sever under the title *Erbil Vakayinamesi*. Dating back to the VIIth century, the *Chronican Anonymum,* known as *Chronicle of Khuzistan or Guidi Chronicle* because it was published by Ignazio Guidi, covers church affairs and political developments from 590 until the fall of the Sassanids. It was published by Ignazio Guidi in Leipzig in 1903 with a Latin translation and by Benjamin Haddad in Baghdad in 1976 with an Arabic translation. The *Ktābā d-Rešāna* (Book of the Abbots) by Toma al-Merci (Thomas of Marga), who lived in the IXth century, provides valuable information about the monastic life of the Eastern Church. The work was published in two volumes by E. A. W. Budge in London in 1893 with an English translation. It was also translated into Arabic by Albert Abona under the title *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ* and published in Baghdad in 1990. *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, which is considered to have been compiled in the Xth century and is named after the city where the manuscript was found*: History of the Assyrian Nestorian Church of the East*, an Arabic work of unknown authorship, contains the history of the Eastern Church from 251 to 650. However, the events between 422-484 are not included in the work. Extremely important for the history of the Church

This work, which was published in four parts by Adday Sher in Paris between 1908 and 1919, was translated into Turkish by Celal Kabadayı. "*Kitâbu "l-Majdel*" (The Tower Book), a work written in Arabic on the history of the Eastern Church, contains the history of the patriarchs of the Eastern Church starting from the Apostle Adday until his time. In fact, "*Majdal*" is a small part of a large collection of writings on various religious topics by Mari b. Suleiman, who lived in the first half of the XIIth century and is still in manuscript form. Siliba b. Yuhannan al-Mawsili, who lived in the first half of the fourteenth century, added the lives of eight patriarchs who lived until his time (1318), removed some information and added new information. Amr b. Metta, who lived in the same period, reorganized and finalized this work. This last work is better known under the name of Amr b. Metta. Mari b. Suleiman's *Ahbāru Betāriketi Kursiyyi "l-Mashrik Min Kitābi "l-Majdel* (News of the Eastern Patriarchate Chair in the Book of Majdal) and Amr b. Metta's *Ahbāru Fetāriketi Kursiyyi "l- Mashrik min Kitābi "l-Majdel* (News of the Eastern Patriarchate Chair in the Book of Majdal) were published by Henricus Gismondi in Rome in 1899. The work of Bar Habreus, one of the Jacobite historians who lived in the XIIIth century, on the history of the church also includes the history of the Eastern Church. This work was translated into Arabic by Matran Siliba Sham "un under the title *al-Târihu "l-Kenise li Ibn "l-Ibrî* (Ibn "l-Ibrî "s Church History). For the compilations of the martyr narratives of the Eastern Church, which are very important in terms of church history, Adday Sher's "*Kitāb Sirat al-Shuhuri Shuhedāi al-Mashriki al-Kaddisin*" (Book on the Life of the Most Famous Holy Eastern Martyrs) and Albert Abona's "*Shuhedau al-Mashrik*" (Martyrs of the East), which contain almost all of these narratives, were consulted. Apart from these first-hand sources, Albert Abona's three-volume Arabic work "*Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye*" (History of the Eastern Church), which contains Syriac sources that we could not access, was frequently consulted. Also

Yusuf Habbi's *Keniset al-Mashrik (*The Church of the East), which deals with the early period of the church in detail, and Jean Maurice Fiey's *Ahwālu Nasara fī Khilāfeti Beni 'Abbās (The* Status of Christians in the Abbasid Period), which deals with the Abbasid period of the church, were utilized.

First-hand sources are very important for understanding the basic doctrines and religious practices of the Eastern Church. Foremost among these works are the Syriac works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who is considered the greatest authority by the Eastern Church. Alphonse Mingana wrote two important works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed* and *Commentary of Mopsuestia on the Lord "s Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*, Commentary on the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist), the first in 1932 and the second in 1933, together with English translations. Nestorius' work translated from Greek into Syriac was unearthed in the library of the Nestorian Patriarchate of Kochanis in Hakkāri in 1899 and published by Paul Bedjan in Leipzig in 1910 under the title *Ketābā de-metqerēte 'gurtā de-Heraqlīdos de-men Darmsoq de-sīm le-mār Nesṭōrīs.* This work, known in the Western world as *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, was translated into English by G. R. Driver and Leonard Hodgson and published in Oxford in 1915. Mar Narsay (d. 502 CE), the most prominent poet of the Eastern Church in the Iranian area, who made the greatest efforts for the spread of diophysite Christology within the Eastern Church, wrote *memras* (poetic works written in certain rhythms) on various subjects, which occupy a very important place in the formation of the church's views on various issues. Although there is no complete translation of these memras, various parts of them have been translated in many works written in different languages. Several works on Christology written in Syriac within the Eastern Church in the VIth and VIIth centuries.

The texts were published in English translation by Luise Abramowski and Alan E. Goodman in Cambridge in 1972 as *A Nestorian Collection of* Christological *Texts*. Babai's (d. 628) *Memre d "Mar Babai* "*al Alahuta u"al*, known as the *Liber de Unione* or *The Book of* Union, the only complete work on Eastern Church Christology.

His work *"Nasuta u "al Parshopa Dahdayuta* (Memras of Mar Babai on the Deity and Humanity of Christ and the Unity of Persons) is extremely important for understanding the Christological teachings of the Church. In particular, G. Chediath's *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great,* published in Kottayam in 1982, has been consulted for this work. Likewise, the letter of Isho'yab Jidali (d. 646), who lived at the same time as Babai and was the patriarch of the Eastern Church, which contains cryptological issues, occupies an important place in the understanding of church Christology. This letter was translated into Arabic and published by Lois Sako in 2014 under the title *al-Batrik Isho'yab al-Jidali, Hayatuhu wa Risaletuhu "l-Lahutiyya* (Patriarch Isho'yab al-Jidali, His Life and Theological Letter). The works of important Eastern Church theologians who grew up in the Islamic period, including their works on theology and religious practices, as well as their apologies and refutations in the context of their debates with Muslims, were used extensively in the study. Among these, the religious debate of Patriarch Timotheos I (d. 823) with the Abbasid caliph Mahdi (775-785), the *Kitāb al-Masā'il wal al-Ajwiba* (Book of Questions and Answers) and *Kitāb al-Burhan* by Ammar al-Basri, who lived in the same period, are very important. Apart from these, the various works of Abdullah b. Tayyib (d. 1043) and Elia bar Shinaya (d. 1027), the bishop of Nusaybin, are also important sources for understanding the basic theological doctrines and religious practices of the Eastern Church. Most of the works of these two theologians were written in Arabic. Here we present Mar "Abdisho" bar Brikha's (d. 1318) *Kthabha d-methqre marganitha d-methqre marganitha d-methqre*, which summarizes the theology and sacramental understanding of the Eastern Church.

"edta "attiqta d- madhnha, or Margānitā (The Pearl), as it is more commonly called, deserves special mention. This work was translated into Arabic by Lois Sako under the title *al-Jawhar, Hülasetun Lahutiyya* (Jawhar, Summary of Theology). For the Church's views on the apocalypse and the afterlife, the work of Suleiman of Basra (XIIIth century), *Ktābā d- Debboritā* (The Book of the Bee), provides extensive information. This work was published in English translation by E. A. W. Budge in 1886. George Percy Badger's *The Nestorians and Their Rituals,* published in two volumes in 1852, provides important data on the worship and religious practices of the church. The modern works of many scholars working on the Eastern Church from various perspectives, especially Sebastian P. Brock, who has a distinguished place in the field of Syriac studies, have been utilized. Regarding the persons, works, geography, etc. mentioned in our study; Albert Abona's *Edebu "l-Luğati "l-Ârâmiyye* (1995), *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage (GEDSH)* (2011) and Sebastian P. Brock's *Studies in Syriac Literature, A Short Framework,* translated into Turkish by Kutlu Akalın and Zafer Duygu (2017) were utilized.

In terms of the history of religions in Turkey, one of the limited number of studies on the Eastern Nestorian Church is Kadir Albayrak's *Chaldeans and Nestorians*.[22] In the same period, Mehmet Çelik published a study titled "*Mosaic of the Middle East: Assyrians and Nestorians"*.[23] Apart from these, Mustafa Ünal's *Nestorianism and*

[22] Kadir Albayrak, *Chaldeans and Nestorians* (Ankara: Vadi Yayınları, 1997). The following works by the same author should also be emphasized: "Nesturis and the Nestorian Church", *Demokrasi Platformu* 2/8 (2006), 239-246; "Nestorianism", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Ansiklopedisi (DIA*), (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 2007), 33/15-17; "Past and Present Nestorian Missionarism", *Journal of Islamic Research* 20/2 (2007), 164-171.

[23] Mehmet Çelik, *Middle East Mosaic Assyrians-Nasturids* (Elazığ: Fırat University Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1996).

Turks,[24] A. Vahap Taştan "s *Nestorianism in Central Asia*,[25] Muhammet Tarakçı "s *Nestorius and Christology*,[26] Mehmet Alıcı "s *The Position of Christians in the Early Period of the Sassanid Empire and the First Synods*,[27] Ramazan Turgut "s *Koçanis: Three Centuries of Nestorian Patriarchate Center (1600-1915)*,[28] Zafer Duygu "s *An Evaluation on the Early Centuries of the Eastern Church*,[29] Talha Fortacı "s master "s study titled *Nestorian Church (From the Beginning to the Present)*[30] and Kürşat Demirci "s *Nestorian Christianity and Theology of Antakya*[31] . Nestorians, who have been more closely associated with Muslim societies throughout history and are in fact an important element of our history, culture and civilization, should be the subject of more scientific studies. In this respect, there is a need for new studies on various topics such as the Peshitta, the Syriac translation of the Old and New Testaments, Afrahat (d. c. 345) and Mar Efrem (d. 373), who are important figures of the common heritage of the Syriacs, early Syriac asceticism, which developed independently of the Egyptian asceticism, Nestorians' relations with Muslims and their place in Islamic culture and civilization.

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[24] Mustafa Ünal, "Nestorianism and the Turks", *Dinler Tarihi Araştırmaları-III* (Ankara: Dinler Tarihi Derneği Yayınları, 2002), 529-538.
[25] A. Vahap Taştan, *Nestorianism in Central Asia* (Kayseri: 2003).
[26] Muhammet Tarakçı, "Nestorius and Christology", *Journal of Uludag University Theology Faculty* 19/1 (2010), 215-241.
[27] Mehmet Alıcı, "The Position of Christians in the Early Sassanid Empire and the First Synods", *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Theology* 56/1 (2015), 33-75.
[28] Ramazan Turgut, "Kochanis: Three Centuries of Nestorian Patriarchate Center (1600-1915)", in *International Tarihte Hakkari Symposium Proceedings*, ed. Yaşar Kaplan et al. (Ankara: Hakkâri University Publications, 2016), 2/19-24.
[29] Zafer Duygu, "An Evaluation on the Early Centuries of the Eastern Church", *The Journal of Mesopotamian Studies, Periodical Journal for Kurdish, Arabic and Syriac Studies* 2/1 (Winter 2017), 133-155.
[30] Talha Fortacı, *Nestorian Church (From the Beginning to the Present)*, (Konya: Necmettin Erbakan University Institute of Social Sciences, Master's Thesis, 2017).
[31] Kürşat Demirci, *Nestorian Christianity and Antakya Theology* (Istanbul: Ayışığıkitapları, 2018).

PART ONE

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NESTURIAN CHURCH

One of the most challenging aspects of the history of religions is the effort to reveal the historical development of a religious tradition that emerged, institutionalized and continued its existence thousands of years ago. To reveal the developments that took place in a certain part of history hundreds or thousands of years ago and to analyze the phenomena in a healthy way, it is necessary to reveal the events together with their backgrounds and to evaluate the emerging phenomena in their own context. This chapter will focus on the unique historical development course of the Eastern Church and try to reveal the historical background that led to the emergence of theological and Christological views that differ from other churches. In this context, the spread of Christianity to the East, the socio-political situation of Iran and its effects on Christian communities, the common heritage of Syriac Christianity living on both sides of the border under Roman and Persian rule, and the reflections of the cryptological debates on the axis of the councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) organized within the Roman Empire among Syriac Christians will be discussed. The series of events that led to the naming of the Eastern Church as the Nestorian Church will be analyzed and the efforts of the church to determine its own course will be examined. The situation and attitudes of this church, which tended to expand continuously despite living under the domination of foreigners throughout history and was able to establish activity in a wide geography with its missionary activities, will be analyzed under the rule of Muslims.

1. THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY TO THE EAST

Christianity originated in Jerusalem among the Jews under the Roman Empire and gained adherents in different parts of the empire. This religion,

It did not only develop within the borders of the Roman Empire, but also in the geography dominated by the Parthian (247 BC-224 AD) and Sassanid (224 AD-642 AD) empires to the east of the empire, simultaneously with its spread in the west. Outside the borders of the Roman Empire, terms such as the Eastern Church or the Persian (Iranian) Church were used for the Christian communities that developed in the geography under Parthian and Sassanid rule.[32] The Euphrates River was generally accepted as a natural border between the Roman Empire and the Parthian and successor Sassanid empires, although the parties sometimes violated the border.[33] The geography ruled by the Parthian and Sassanid empires included what is now Iraq, Iran, the eastern parts of Arabia, the eastern parts of the Tigris within Turkey, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan. These two empires used the city of Seleucia-Ktesiphon[34] , 30 kilometers south of Baghdad, as their capital. Therefore, what is now Iraq corresponded to the heart of these empires.[35] At the time of the emergence of Christianity, there were various religions and beliefs such as Magianism, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, gnostic beliefs and Arab paganism in Iran.[36] Apart from Iranian groups such as Parthians, Persians and Medes, there was a large Aramaean/Syriac population and Arabs living in Mesopotamia. Aramaic/Syriac communities bordered both empires.

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[32] Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik*, 50-52, 122; Christoph Baumer, *Keniset al-Mashrik, al-Tarih al-Musawwaru li al-Masihiyyat al-Ashuriyya*, trans. Aziz Emanuel Zibari (Dohuk: Râbitetu "l-Kitabi wa "l-Udebai "l-Asuriyyin, 2009), 10; Christopher Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East: How Persian was Persian Christianity?", *The Journal of the Assyrian Academic Society* 10/1 (1996), 57; Mehmet Alıcı, "The Position of Christians in the Early Sassanid Empire and the First Synods", 39; Zafer Duygu, "An Evaluation on the Early Centuries of the Eastern Church", 134.

[33] Christoph Baumer, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik,* 11.

[34] These two cities were built on both sides of the Tigris River during the Parthian and Sassanid periods. In time, new cities were added to them and connected by bridges. The name Medain for this complex of cities is an Arabic adaptation of the Aramaic name "Medinetha". The cosmopolitan population consisted of Aramaeans, Persians, Greeks and Syrians, with Jews, Christians and Magi in the majority. The name Medain was used specifically for Ktesiphon, founded by the Parthians on the left bank of the Tigris in the first century BC. Casim Avci, "Medain", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)* (Ankara: TDV Publications, 2003), 28/289. While Seleucia-Ktesiphon was generally used as the winter capital, Jundishapur in Khuzestan was used as the summer capital. Fiey, "The Spread of the Persian Church", 98.

[35] Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 56.

[36] Later on, Manichaeism and Mazdakism would be added to these beliefs. See Ulaş Sivrioğlu, "Christianity and Christians in Iran, Mesopotamia and Caucasia during the Sassanid Empire", *Journal of Academic History and Thought* 3/10, (2010), 26.

They had a dense population in their tribes. The Aramaic language and its dialects, which were also used by the Jews, had spread over a wide region from Palestine to Mesopotamia, from southeastern Anatolia to northern Arabia.[37] With the spread of Christianity in this geography ruled by the Parthian and Sassanid regimes, it was institutionalized in its own unique way, separate from the Christian churches in the West. Christianity is the only religion in Iran that expanded its influence to the detriment of other religions until the advent of Islam.[38]

There are two categories of sources that provide information about the emergence, spread and institutionalization of Christianity in Iran. The first one consists of the data transmitted by the Eastern Church tradition. The second source consists of the data provided by written works, inscriptions and archaeological findings dating back to a time close to that period. The narratives transmitted by the Eastern Church tradition are too important to be ignored, even though they are mixed with legends, exaggerations, historical inconsistencies and geographical inaccuracies. However, these data need to be subjected to a rigorous reading and findings that will shed light on the spread of Christianity in Iran.[39]

1.1. Eastern Church Tradition

The Eastern Church/Nestorian Church tradition, especially from the end of the Vth century, began to claim apostolic origins by trying to trace its history back to the apostles and claimed that Christianity began to spread east of the Euphrates in the first century AD. According to this tradition, the Apostle Thomas and a group of seventy disciples, Addai (Adday), Aggai, Ahhai and Mari, began to preach the Gospel. Apostle Thomas (Tuma), Indian Church; Addai and Aggai, Urfa

[37] Albert Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, (Beirut: Dar al-Mashrik, 1995), 16-22.
[38] Sivrioglu, "Sassanid Empire", 26.
[39] Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik*, 73- 89.

Church and the Church of Mari de Ktesiphon and Seleucia.[40] Indeed, in 612, the bishops of the Nestorian Church presented a document to Hosrev II in which they claimed that their church was founded by Addai.[41] Patriarch of the Nestorian Church

Rabban Sawma, who met with the Pope at the Vatican as the envoy of Yahbalaha III (1281-1317), stated in his reply to the Pope that their church was founded by Thomas, Addai and Mari. In the Eastern Church, Barhadbshabba "Arbaya (6th-7th century), Timotheos the Great (780-823), Abdullah b. Tayyib (d. 1043), Elia (Iliyya) bar Shinaya (d. 1046),

Notable theologians and church historians such as "Abdisho" bar Brikha (d. 1318), Mari b. Suleiman, Amr b. Metta, and others have often alluded to this claim in their works.[42] Indeed, the liturgy of the Eastern Church includes special prayers for the Apostles Thomas, Addai and Mari. Various legends around these figures, who occupy a very important place in this tradition, began to enter Syriac literature from an early period. Therefore, we will try to elaborate on these figures in detail.

1.1.1. The Acts of the Apostle Thomas

The Acts of the Apostle Thomas tells the story of Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, on his mission journey from Jerusalem to India, where he preached the Gospel.[43] This work was written in the first quarter of the third century by one of Bardaysan's (d. 222) disciples, and the oldest copy dates to the V century.

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[40] Albert Abona, *Târihu "l-Kenisat al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* (Beirut: Dar al-Mashrik, 2002), 1/6, 7, 17; Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik,* 122; Adday Sher, *Tarihu Kaldo ve Assur*, (Beirut: Matbaat al-Katolikiyyeti li "l-Abai Yesu "iyyin, 1912), 2/1-7.

[41] *Synodcion Orientale*, 581.

[42] Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik*, 73, 123; Abona, *Tarih "ul-Keniseti,* 1/6; Sher, *Tarihu Kaldo Assur*, 2/6; Adday Sher, *Nusaybin Academy*, trans. Nesim Doru (Istanbul: Yaba Publications, 2006), 177; Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi,* trans. Erol Sever (Istanbul: Yaba Publications, 2014), 70; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betāriketi Kursiyyi "l-Mashrik min Kitābi "l-Majdal*, trans. Henricus Gismondi, (Rome: C. de Luigi, 1899), 1-5; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetāriketi Kursiyyi "l-Mashrik Min Kitābi "l-Majdal*, ed. Henricus Gismondi (Rome: C. de Luigi, 1899), 1-2; Bar Habreus, *al-Târihu "l-Kenise li Ibn "l-Ibrî*, trans. Matran Siliba Sham'un (Dohuk: Dar al-Mashrik, 2012), 2/1-2.

[43] For the Syriac text, see Paul Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum (AMS*) (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1892), 3/1-175; Albertus F. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas: Introduction, Text and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1962).

is dated.[44] The famous church historians Eusebius (263- 339) and Bar Hebraeus (1225-1286) report that on his way to India, Thomas the Apostle converted many people from Parthia, Medes, Persia and Hindustan to the message of the Gospel.[45] The *Urhoy Chronicle* reports that in 394 the holy relics of the Apostle Thomas were transferred to Urfa.[46] According to Epiphanius (315-403), this relic, which contains gnostic elements, was widespread among gnostic communities.[47] Our knowledge about the Apostle Thomas, a very important figure in Eastern Christianity and the Syriac tradition and considered the first Christian missionary of the East, is very limited. There are various passages in the New Testament about Thomas, one of the twelve apostles.[48] His real name was Iudas (Judas) and he is described as "the twin brother of Jesus", especially in East Syriac Christianity. Thomas means twin in Aramaic. This nickname was used to avoid confusion with Judas Iscariot. In 1945, the Gospel of Thomas, one of the most important parts of the Nag Hammadi corpus found in Egypt, was attributed to him.[49] There has been much debate among Western scholars on the historical authenticity of the Apostle Thomas' mission movement in the East. According to the first view, the mission activities of the Apostle Thomas are unhistorical and are nothing but legends. According to the second view, although it is accepted that these narratives are mixed with legends, it is argued that there is a lot of historical evidence that the Apostle Thomas carried out mission activities.[50]

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[44] Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik*, 80; Abona, *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 58-59.
[45] Eusebius, *Church History*, trans. Furkan Akderin (Istanbul: Chiviyazıları Publishing House, 2011), 65; Bar Habreus, *al-Târihu "l-Kenise*, 2/1-2.
[46] *Urhoy Chronicle (540 AD)*, trans. Zafer Duygu, *Late Antiquity in Syriac Historiography; Christianity, Islam, Political History (STGAHI*) (Istanbul: Divan Kitap, 2016), 114.
[47] Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik*, 81-82; Jeff W. Chillders, "Thomas, Acts of", *GEDSH*, 410.
[48] Matthew, 10/2-4; Mark, 3/16-19; Luke, 6/13-16; John, 11/16; 14/5-6, 22; 20/24-29; 21/1-2; Acts, 1/13.
[49] Zafer Duygu, *İsa, Paul, İnciller, Hristiyanlık Neden ve Nasıl Ortaya Çıktı*? (İstanbul: Düşün Yayıncılık, 2018), 137-140.
[50] Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik*, 77-79, 83-88; Aziz S. Atiya, *History of Eastern Christianity*, translated by Nurettin Hiçyılmaz (Istanbul: Doz Publications, 2005), 391-392; Wilhelm Baum - Dietmar W. Winkler, *The Church of the East: A Concise History*, English Translation by Miranda G. Henry (London and New York: Routledge-Curzon, 2003), 51-52.

1.1.2. Addai Doctrine

Addai's Doctrine is about the Christianization of Urfa by the Apostle Addai and the sending of various missionaries to the East. This work includes various legends such as the legend of Abgar, the discovery of the Holy Cross, the portrait of Jesus, King Abgar's letter to the Roman Emperor Tiberius and Jesus' grace to Urfa.[51] The legend of Abgar, the most important part of the work in terms of our subject, is estimated to have been written in the middle of the third century.[52] The church historian Eusebius (263-339), in his work on the history of the church, relates the legend of the Apostle Addai and King Abgar in clearer terms and states that he took the letter sent by King Abgar to Jesus and the reply letter of Jesus from the Syriac texts in the Urfa city archive.[53] Other myths from the Addai teaching were added to this text in the V and VI centuries. According to the legend of Abgar, which entered the ancient Christian literature, when an embassy delegation of Abgar V, the king of Urfa, stopped in Jerusalem on their way back, they heard about Jesus, who healed the sick and performed miracles there. Ananias the Printer (Ananius), who was in the delegation, told King Abgar about Jesus when he reached Urfa. Since the king himself was sick, he sent a letter to Jesus with Ananias inviting Jesus to his city. Jesus also sent a letter to the king saying that he could not come to Urfa, but that he would send a disciple to him after his ascension. After Jesus' death, the Apostle Thomas sent Addai, one of the seventy, to Urfa. Addai goes to Urfa and first stays in the house of Tobias the Jew. When the king finds out, he calls him to him. Addai tells him that Jesus has sent him and he restores the king to health.

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[51] For the earliest copies of the Doctrine of Addai outside the work of Eusebius, see London, British Library, Add. 14654, fol. 33 (5th cent.); London, British Library, Add. 14644, fols. 1-9 (6th cent.); St. Petersburg, Imperial Public Library, Syr. 4, fols. 1^{v} -7^{v} , 54, 9^{r} -34^{r} (5th/6th cent.). The "Doctrine of Addai" has been published many times with the Syriac text and translations. See: *The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle*, ed. George Phillips, (London: Trübner & co., 1876); Paul Bedjan, *AMS*, 1/45-52; George Howard, *The Teaching of Addai* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1981); Albert Abona, *Shuhedâu "l-Mashrik*, (Baghdad: 1985), 11-14; Gorgis David Malik, *History of the Assyrians, The Ancient East Syriac Evangelical-Apostolic Church from Early Christianity*, trans. Vedii İlmen, (Istanbul: Yaba Publications, 2012), 64-81.

[52] Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik*, 90.

[53] Eusebius, *Church History*, 33.

The king then converted to Christianity and Christianity began to spread in Urfa.[54] Apart from these passages quoted by Eusebius (263- 339), the texts of the Doctrine of Addai provide more extensive and different information. According to these texts, Addai, together with his disciples Aggai and Mari, carried out mission activities in the eastern and Mesopotamian regions. Addai died after appointing his disciple Aggai in his place and was buried in the cemetery of the king's family. After the death of King Abgar, his son, who succeeded him, returned to his old beliefs and killed Aggai. Since Aggai died before he had time to consecrate his successor Palut, Palut went to Antioch and was consecrated by Patriarch Seraphion and then appointed bishop of Urfa. According to these texts, Addai and his disciples, especially Aggai and Mari, made many mission trips to the eastern and Mesopotamian regions and built churches in Urfa and many other regions in the east. In Urfa, he blessed and appointed his assistants such as Palut, Abdshalama, Barsima, etc.[55]

According to the overwhelming majority of experts, the present version of the Addai Doctrine is based on the church historian Eusebius (263-339), with many additions.[56] The authenticity of the legend of King Abgar has been criticized on several points. Although Eusebius states that he saw the data on the legend in the city archives of Urfa and translated them from Syriac, the unknown *Urhoy Chronicle, which is* also based on the city archives of Urfa and describes the local kings of Urfa and the Christian communities of the region between 132 BC and 540 AD, does not mention the correspondence between Jesus and Abgar, nor does it mention any king of Urfa who became a Christian.[57] Mentioned in the legend

Abgar V was king between 4 BC-7 AD and for the second time between 13-50 AD. Before 216, Julius Africanus, who visited Urfa, said that Abgar IX.

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[54] Eusebius relates the story up to this point. Eusebius, *Church History*, 31-33, 38.
[55] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 11-14; Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik*, 104-105.
[56] Abona, *Tarih'ul-Keniseti,*1/11-12.
[57] Emotion, *STYGA*, 109-121.

(179- 214) was a guest in his palace. He reported that Christianity reached the king's palace and that Bardaysan (154-222), an important Christian theologian and philosopher of the time, also stayed in the palace.[58] Bardaysan, in his *Book on the Laws of the Countries,* stated that the king was a Christian and had banned some pagan religious practices.[59] Therefore, it has been suggested that the king could be Abgar IX, not Abgar V. Another issue that has been criticized about this legend is the fact that Aggai, who is shown as the successor of Addai, died before he had time to bless Palut, and Palut went to Antioch and was consecrated by the patriarch Seraphion and appointed as the bishop of Urfa. Since Seraphion, the patriarch of Antioch, was patriarch between 190 and 211[60] there is a long period of time between the two.

1.1.3. Mari's Work

Mar Mari holds a very important place in the Eastern Christian tradition. According to this tradition, Christianity spread in Mesopotamia and Iran especially as a result of Mari's activities and the Church of Ctesiphon and Seleucia, the patriarchal center of Eastern Christianity, was founded by her. The *Acts of* Mari, which describes the mission activities of Mar Mari, was written at a later date than the works mentioned above. According to experts, this text was recorded between the VIth and IXth centuries.[61] It is possible that this work was produced in Dayra d-Qunni/Qoni (Kunni/Koni Monastery), which was famous in the early Islamic period and where Mar Mari was buried. It is possible that this work on Mar Mari's mission trips is a counterpart to the work on the mission trips of Mani, the founder of Manichaeism.

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[58] As cited in E. R. Hayes, *Urfa Academy*, trans. Yaşar Günenç (Istanbul: Yaba Publications, 2005), 88.
[59] William Cureton, *Spicilegium Syriacum: Containing Remains of Bardesan, Meliton, Ambrose and Mara Bar Serapion* (London: Rivington, 1855), 31-32.
[60] Hanna Dolabani, *Biography of the Patriarchs of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch,* trans. Gabriyel Akyüz (Istanbul: Mardin Tarihi İhtisas Ktüphanesi, 2006), 13.
[61] Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik*, 109-110; Albert Abona, *Tarih "ul- Keniseti,* 1/18.

It may also have been intended.[62] According to the *Acts of Mari*, Addai commissioned his disciple Mari to spread Christianity in the east and Mesopotamia. Together with his disciples, Mari headed towards Southern Mesopotamia via the route of Nusaybin, Mosul, Erbil, Kirkuk. After sending her disciple Tomas to Duhok, Hakkari, Urmia and Med, Mari continued southward and reached the Parthian capital of Ktesiphon-Seleucia. She founded a small church in Seleucia. The people of this region went to the king of Ktesiphon and Kokhe region and complained about her. Mari appeared before the king and healed his sick sister and was not prosecuted. She founded the Dayra d-Qunni Church here. After his mission activity in Seleucia, he established the Kokhe Church here and continued his activities in regions such as Kashker, Misan, Ahwaz, Shushter, etc. He returned again to Ktesiphon-Seleucia. *After bequeathing the Kokhe Church to be the administrative center for all the eastern churches, he consecrated the Pope as his successor. When he died, he was buried in Dayra d-Qunni.[63]

The Acts of Mari, of which we have tried to give a brief summary, has been criticized from various angles. For example, according to the text, Mari appointed the Pope (310-329) after her. However, according to *the Erbil Chronicle*, Papa was the patriarch of Ctesiphon and Seleucia in the late III and early IV centuries.[64] However, some topographical details about Ktesiphon, Seleucia and the Church of Kokhe in *Mari's Acts* and Mari b. Suleiman's *Kitāb al-Majdal* are at least accepted as evidence that Mar Mari was engaged in mission activities in this region.[65] Since the bed of the Tigris River changed between 79-116 AD, the location of the Kokhe Church in relation to Ktesiphon and Seleucia changed after that date. The above-mentioned

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[62] Sebastian P. Brock, "Mari, Acts of", *GEDSH*, 268.

* Pope is a name and has nothing to do with the title of Pope, which is used for the supreme spiritual leader of the Catholic Church. This person is referred to as Fafa in Arabic sources.

[63] Bedjan, *AMS*, 1/45-94; Albert Abona, *Shuhedâu "l-Mashrik*, 15-35; Amir Harrak, *The Acts of Mar Mari, the Apostle* (Leiden- Boston: Brill, 2005), 1-83.

[64] Mshiha Zha, Erbil Vakayinamesi, p. 114.

[65] Sebastian P. Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century and its Absence at Councils in the Roman Empire", trans. Zafer Duygu, *Introduction to Christology,* in *Miaphysite, Dyophysite and Chalcedonian Understandings*, ed. and trans. Zafer Duygu - Kutlu Akalın (Istanbul: Divan Kitap, 2018), 77.

Since the position of the Kokhe Church during Mari's mission activities in the texts coincides with the situation before 116, some researchers have argued that Mari may have been here between the mentioned dates.[66] The city of Seleucia was founded by Seleucos Nicator in the IV century BC as a Hellenistic center on the west side of the Tigris. It was abandoned during the Parthian period due to a change in the course of the Tigris and Ktesiphon was used. Although the exact location of Ktesiphon cannot be determined, it is located on the east side of the Tigris. When Seleucia or Seleucia-Ktesiphon is mentioned in Sassanid and Syriac sources, it is not referring to Old Seleucia, but to the city known as New Seleucia, Kokhe or Veh Ardeshir on the right side of the Tigris, which was used as the capital by the Sassanids. In this respect, Kokhe is also known as Veh Ardeshir or New Seleucia. It is of Aramaic origin and was founded east of Old Seleucia. When Seleucia or Seleucia-Ktesiphon is mentioned in Sassanid and Syriac sources, Kokhe is referred to and not to the ancient Hellenistic city.[67]

1.2. Historical Data

The New Testament provides information about the spread of Christianity east of the Euphrates among the Parthians, Medes, Elamites and Jews who came to Jerusalem from Mesopotamia.[68] However, historical data on the spread of Christianity outside the borders of the Roman Empire or on the eastern side of the Euphrates River are available from the end of the IInd century and the beginning of the IIIrd century. Bardaysan's *Book of the Laws of the Countries* is one of the most important works on this subject. This work was written in the Parthian and

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[66] Bu konu ile ilgili geniş bir değerlendirme için bkz. Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik*, 146-158; Jean Maurice Fiey, "Topographie of al- Madaini", in *Sumer* 23 (1967), 3-38; "Topographie Chrêtienne de Mahoze", *OS*, XII (1967), 387-420; *Jalons pour une histoire de l "Église en Iraq*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (CSCO) 310/Subsidia 36 (Louvain: Secretariat du CSCO, 1970), 41-44.
[67] Marica C. Cassis, "Seleucia-Ctesiphon", *GEDSH*, 365; "Kokhe", *GEDSH*, 244.
[68] Acts, 2/9-11.

His account of the spread of Christianity in Sassanid geography has been regarded as solid evidence.[69] Bardaysan writes in his work:

> "... What do we think of the new Christians, the nation that Christ is building in every place and region. Wherever we go, we are all called Christians after Christ's name... Our Christian brothers and sisters in Parthia do not take two wives, our Persian brothers and sisters do not marry their daughters. Our Median brothers do not run away from their dead, bury them alive and leave them to the dogs. The people of Urfa do not kill their adulterous wives and sisters. Rather they turn away from them and leave it to God's judgment. The Hatrites do not stone thieves."[70]

The Mesopotamian-born Tityanus (110-180), one of the writers and theologians of Syriac/Aramaic Christianity before Bardaysan, converted to Christianity during a trip to Rome and returned to Urfa in 172 and settled there. Here he devoted himself to Syriac studies and compiled elements from the four Greek Gospels into a single Syriac Gospel text called the *Diatessaron* (Greek for quadrilateral, harmony of the four parts). This text was widely used among Eastern Christians until the V century.[71] The presence of Bardaysan and Tityanus in the region has been suggested as evidence for the early adoption of Christianity by communities of Syriac/Aramaic origin. [72]As a matter of fact, Eusebius (d.339) reports that in 189 a synod was convened in Urfa by bishops from Mesopotamia and neighboring regions to celebrate Easter on Sunday and that there were many churches in the Sassanid geography. The *Urhoy Chronicle*, which is known for the reliability of its information, states that a church belonging to Christians was destroyed by a flood in Urfa in 201.[73] In addition to what Julius Africanus (160-240) reported above, Tertullian (d. 240) in his *Adversus Judaeos* (A g a i n s t the Jews)

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[69] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 77.
[70] Cureton, *Spicilegium Syriacum*, 33.
[71] Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik*, 241-253; Hayes, *The Academy of Urfa*, 50-86.
[72] Philip Schaff (ed.), "Eusebius Pamphilius: Church History, Life of Constantine the Great, Oration in Praise of Constantine", trans. by Arthur Cushman, *NPNF2-01* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1890), 576-578.
[73] *Urhoy Chronicle (540 AD)*, 109-121.

He states that Christianity spread among the Parthians, Medes and Elamites.[74] According to Sebastian P. Brock, who evaluated all the sources on the arrival of Christianity in Urfa, although it is possible to say that Christianity reached Urfa towards the end of the first century, there are no satisfactory sources for this. But it is certain that Christianity spread (in various forms) in Urfa towards the end of the second century. By the end of the III century it had reached the surrounding villages and by the IV century a certain form of orthodox Christianity had begun to emerge.[75] According to the *Chronicle of Erbil*, which chronicles the Christian communities and bishops of Erbil between 100-540, the Apostle Addai crossed the Tigris towards the end of the first century and began mission activities in Erbil, appointing Pkida as bishop there. The work states that during the fall of the Parthians and the establishment of the Sassanid state, Christians living in the east were not oppressed like their co-religionists in the west, and lists the names of seventeen episcopal centers besides Ktesiphon-Seleucia and Nusaybin. Accordingly, the first bishop appointed to the capital city of Ktesiphon-Seleucia was Papa (310-329), who was consecrated by Aha d-Abuhi (273-293), the bishop of Erbil. When the Pope's activities to give the capital bishopric authority over the eastern dioceses drew reactions from other bishops, he sent a letter to the western bishops asking for their help. The western bishops also supported the capital diocese to have authority over other dioceses. As a result, the diocese of Ctesiphon and Seleucia was recognized as the patriarchal see of the Eastern Church.[76] During the Parthian Empire, which was tolerant towards its subjects in religious matters, Ahura Mazda and the Greek gods

[74] Philip Schaff (ed.), "Latin Christianity: Its Founder, Tertullian", *ANF03* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2006), 325.
[75] Sebastian Brock, "Eusebius and Syriac Christianity," in *From Ephrem to Romanos: Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity*, part II (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1999), 228-229.
[76] Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi*, 70, 71, 101, 114, 117, 118.

were equally respected.[77] Compared to the Roman Empire, Christian communities in the Parthian Empire and the early years of the Sassanid Empire did not face any repression.[78] This shows that extensive mission activities could be carried out during this period.[79]

Apart from the artifacts mentioned above, there are various inscriptions and archaeological findings that provide information about the presence of Christianity in the eastern regions. On the island of Kharg, opposite Bahrain, Syriac inscriptions of Christian tombs dated to around 250 have been found. In Dura Europos, which was under Sassanid rule, there is a Christian meeting house with the addition of a baptistery dating to 232, the remains of which have survived.[80] Abercius Marcellus, bishop of Hierapolis (Jarablus) in the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries, recorded his impressions of a trip to the east of the Euphrates and Nusaybin in a stone inscription: "I wandered in the Syrian plain, in the cities, in Nusaybin, beyond the Euphrates, and everywhere I saw my brethren". This inscription is now on display in the Lateran Museum in Rome.[81] The inscription of Kartir, the greatest religious authority of the Magi during the Sassanid period between 271-293, provides valuable information about the Christians in the region. In the inscription, Kartir mentions that he exterminated Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Nazarenes, Christians, Mandaians and Manichaeans. In addition to the word Christian, the word Nasrani is also used in this inscription. In addition, some other Pahlavi texts also use the word "tsak- (God-fearers)" for Christians.[82] The Syriac/Aramaic language of the Nasrani community

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[77] J. P. Asmussen, "Christian in Iran", in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3(2)/928; Sivrioglu, "Sassanid Empire", 27-28.
[78] Brock, "The Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century", 79; Asmussen, "Christian in Iran", 934.
[79] James R. Russell, "Christianity In Pre-Islamic Persia Literary Sources", *Encyclopædia Iranica* (Accessed 29. 12. 2019).
[80] It is a settlement established on the banks of the Euphrates in Syria. Today it is known as Tell Salihiye. It is 90 km southeast of Deir ez-Zor. Lucas Van Rompay, "Dura-Europos", *GEDSH*, 132; Sivrioglu, "Sassanid Empire", 34.
[81] Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik*, 126; Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/20.
[82] Sivrioglu, "Sassanid Empire", 36, 37; Alıcı, "Sassanid Empire", 40, 43.

liturgy, and those referred to as Christians are thought to refer to the captives using the Greek liturgical language that the Sassanid ruler Shapur I brought from the regions east of the Roman Empire in the battles in which he defeated the Roman Emperor Valerian (260).[83]

From the information presented above, it is clear that although the Eastern Church tradition reports that Christianity began to spread east of the Euphrates in the first century A.D., we have no reliable information about the Christian communities in this region until the beginning of the third century or until the last years of the Parthian Empire. It should be taken into account that Christianity developed within the Parthian Empire simultaneously with its development within the Roman Empire. There seems to be no reason why the apostles and disciples of Jesus should not have carried out their mission activities in the Roman Empire, despite the oppression, among the Aramaean/Syriac communities, which had a significant Jewish population and shared the same language and cultural basin.[84] Therefore, we must accept that there may be a grain of truth in the accounts, mixed with legends, of the first two centuries of Christianity's journey in the east as told by the Eastern Christian tradition.

2. PARTH (247 BC-AD 224) AND THE SASSANID PERIOD (224-651)

2.1. Partlar Period

As mentioned before, the Parthians followed a generally tolerant policy towards the religions under their rule. It is accepted that Christians living under their rule did not face systematic oppression like their co-religionists living under the Roman Empire and carried out their activities in relative comfort.

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[83] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 64; Brock, "The Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century", 77-78.

[84] Even before Christianity, the Iranians were under the influence of the Aramaic/Syriac culture, representative of Mesopotamian culture. The administrative vocabulary (dipīr-clerk, dēn-din, nāmag-letter, Yazn-treasury, muhr-seal, etc.), which passed from Aramaic into Pahlavi, attests to this influence. Wilhelm Eilers, "Iran and Mesopotamia", *The Cambridge History of Iran* 3(1)/493-496.

It is known that many Christians fled to the lands under Parthian rule. [8586]This is confirmed by the martyrdom narrative titled *Kirkuk Martyrs,* which mentions that many Christians fled to the lands under Parthian rule as a result of the oppression by the Roman Emperor Hadrian between 117-138. The information provided by the Nestorian tradition about the structure and activities of the Christian community under Parthian rule after Mar Mari, and especially about the Church of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, is quite limited. These sources provide a list of the leaders of the Christian community in Ktesiphon-Seleucia after Mar Mari until the early Sassanid period. According to this list, after Mar Mari, Ibris (121-137) led the community. He was a Jew, a close relative of Joseph, Mary's fiancé, and was consecrated by the bishop of Jerusalem. His successor, Abraham (159-171), was also originally from Kashkar (Vasht) and was a relative of James, the son of Joseph mentioned above (the leader of the apostles in Jerusalem). He lived in Antioch, where he was consecrated and then sent to Ctesiphon-Seleucia. After his death, James (171-190), also from the family of Joseph, Mary's betrothed, led the community. Near his death, he willed that his disciples Aha d-Buhi [Ahadabu(h)y] (204-220) and Jehbishu go to the patriarch of Antioch to be blessed. Of the two friends who went to Antioch, Jehbishu was captured and killed by the Romans on the grounds that he was a spy, whereupon Aha d-Buhi fled to Jerusalem. After his consecration there, he came to Ktesiphon-Seleucia and began to lead the community. The Western Fathers,[87] , believe that the journey between the two empires was a journey for Christian clergy.

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[85] Brock, "The Sassanid Empire Until the VIth Century", 79; Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik*, 366-367; Alıcı, "The Sassanid Empire", 37-38. There is a widespread view that Christians were systematically oppressed by the Roman Empire during the first three centuries and that great massacres were committed against Christians. However, contemporary evaluations have s h o w n that this is not in line with historical reality and that the persecution of Christians was quite limited. It is accepted that the persecution of Christians and the martyr stories of Christians who were killed began with the church historian Eusebius, especially in the first half of the IVth century when the Roman Empire began to officially patronize Christianity. For a broad evaluation, see Ramazan Adıbelli, "The Myth of Martyrdom in Christianity as a Source of Otherization and Violence", *V. International Philosophy Congress, Proceedings of War and Peace*, ed. Mehmet Fatih Elmas et al., (Istanbul: Sentez Publishing, 2018), 377-383.

[86] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 264.

[87] The western fathers were the bishops of the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire.

When the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia became dangerous for the Eastern Christians, they sent a letter to the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia granting it the authority over the Eastern Christians and the right to manage their administrative affairs. This letter was sent during the reign of Aha d-Buhi, and Shahlupa (220-240), who succeeded him, did not go to the west to be consecrated, but was consecrated in Ktesiphon-Seleucia and began his mission.[88] After Shahlupa's death, the Christian community of Ctesiphon-Seleucia remained without a head for a long time until the arrival of the Pope (310-329), which will be discussed later.

The Erbil Chronicle provides different information about this period. Accordingly, although episcopal centers were established in many parts of the country during the Parthian period, no episcopal center was established in Ktesiphon-Seleucia and Nusaybin.[89] Shahlupa (258-273), the ninth bishop of Erbil, traveled to Ktesiphon and consecrated a Christian there, ordained him a priest and assigned him to guide the community. Shahlupa stayed there for two years and then returned to his own see.[90] Aha d-Buhi (273-291), the next bishop of Erbil, also traveled to the capital at the invitation of the Christians in Ktesiphon. The Christians there asked him to consecrate a bishop who would always remain among them, and so he consecrated the Pope as bishop of Ktesiphon.[91] Shahlupa and Aha d-Buhi were the bishops of Erbil who took care of the affairs of the Christians in Ktesiphon-Seleucia and appointed the Pope as the first bishop of the capital. According to Alfons Mingana, who brought this work to the world of scholarship, the bishoprics of Ibris, Abraham, Jacob, Aha d-Buhi and Shahlupa, who are named as the bishops of the capital after Mar Mari, are fictitious, and of these, Abraham, Aha d-Buhi and Shahlupa were the bishops of Erbil who were present in the capital from time to time.

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[88] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 5-8; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 2-13; Bar Habreus, *al-Tārih al-Kenisha*, 2/4-6; Alfons Mingana, *Msha-Zkha (texte et traduction); Yuhanna Bar Penkaya (Texte)* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1908), 123-124; Adday Sher, *Tarihu Kaldo wa Assur*, 2/7-8; Abona, *Tārih al-Keniseti al-Sharqiyya,* 1/33-36.
[89] Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi*, 101.

[90] Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi*, 106.
[91] Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi*, 111-114.

bishops of the eastern dioceses.[92] According to this work, the first bishop of Ctesiphon-Seleucia, the Pope tried to unite all the eastern dioceses under the bishopric of the capital city, which was strongly opposed by the other bishops. The Pope then asked the western fathers for help and they helped him and sent him letters stating that the eastern dioceses should be united under the diocese of the capital. Thus, all the eastern dioceses were united under the capital diocese and the Pope became the patriarch.[93]

In our opinion, the reliability of the medieval Nestorian chronicles' information on the situation of the Christians under Parthian rule in the first three centuries is highly questionable. Both the contradictory information provided in these works and their late date pose a serious problem. In this respect, we have no serious data for the historical verification of the list of bishops of Ctesiphon-Seleucia for this period. However, the fact that these bishops are presented as related to Joseph, Mary's fiancé, and his son Jacob, and that they are shown to be in contact with the congregations in Jerusalem and Antioch, is very important in terms of pointing to a relationship between the Christian communities of the Mesopotamian region and the Jewish characterized Christian community in Jerusalem. This is because the existence of this relationship has been more strongly demonstrated in recent years, especially in the studies carried out on the clarification of the early periods of Syriac/Aramaic Christianity on the axis of early Eastern Christian literature. Thus, the view that the early periods of Syriac/Aramaic Christianity were part of a more complex developmental process of various ascetic and baptist Jewish-Christian sects such as Esseni, Elkasai, Mandai, etc. is gaining more adherents. As a result of these studies, it is understood that the influence of Jewish Christianity in the origins and formation of Syriac/Aramaic Christianity is much more than known and the debate on the subject continues.

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[92] Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi*, 55.
[93] Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi*, 116-118.

He states.[94] It is also known that there was a significant Jewish population under Parthian rule dating back to the Assyrian and Babylonian exile periods, that they supported the Parthians in the Roman-Parthian wars in the first and second centuries, and that the Parthians in turn supported their revolts against the Romans.[95]

According to the Eastern Christian chronicles, the Christian communities under the Parthians were loosely organized into autonomous dioceses of equal status, with no organic ties between them. The Church of Ktesiphon-Seleucia quickly rose to a leading position among the other dioceses, probably due to its location in the capital.[96] While the *Erbil Chronicle* lists seventeen episcopal centers under Parthian rule, there is no truth in the information that there was no bishopric in the capital city of Ktesiphon-Seleucia and that it was founded by the bishops of Erbil due to fear of pagans. Because there does not seem to be any situation that would prevent the establishment of a bishopric in the capital city, and in the relatively more reliable sources that mention the Pope, there is not the slightest hint that the Pope came from Erbil.

In the Eastern Christian chronicles, it is mentioned that the Church of Ktesiphon-Seleucia had a relationship with the Church of Antioch and its dioceses, especially because of the bishop's consecrations. However, this relationship did not continue in a healthy way due to both the Roman Empire's oppression against Christians and the Roman and Parthian/Sasanian wars. Accordingly, during the reign of Aha d-Buhi, the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia was authorized to manage the affairs of the Eastern Christians through a letter sent by the western fathers and its administrative autonomy was recognized. Mari

[94] Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, *A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (London: t&t Clark, 2006), 11-17; St. Ephrem the Syrian, *Selected Prose Works: Commentary on Genesis; Commentary on Exodus; Homily on Our Lord; Letter to Publius*, trans. by Edward G. Mathews et al, *The Fathers of the Church,* Volume 91 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1994), 10-12.
[95] J. Neusner, "Jews in Iran", *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 3(2)/909-912.
[96] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/33.

Eastern Christian historians such as Suleiman b. Suleiman, Abdullah Ibn Tayyib, "Abdisho" bar Brikha also repeated these statements. According to John bar Penkaye (VII century), one of the most important church historians of the Eastern Church, it was not until the reign of Constantine I (306-337) that the authority to govern the Eastern Church was given to the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia.[97] However, the claim that the chair of Ctesiphon-Seleucia was authorized by the patriarchate of Antioch should be seen as a reflection of the struggle of church centers to legitimize their origins and the concern for apostolic establishment. In fact, the context of the letter sent by the western fathers to the Pope (d.329) seems to be different. As the *Erbil Chronicle claims, the* letter was not sent only to appease the opposition of the bishops who opposed the Pope's efforts to unite the eastern dioceses under the capital diocese. For the bishops did not oppose the leadership of the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia over the east, but the Pope's misrule.[98] It is important to note that the view that the see of Ctesiphon-Seleucia was once affiliated with the Church of Antioch has been expressed especially by Catholic and, by extension, Chaldean scholars.[99]

2.2. Early Sassanid Period

III. In the first half of the first century, the Sassanid dynasty eliminated the Parthians (224) and established its own rule. As the ancestors of this dynasty had previously been the guardians of the temple of Anahita in Isthar[100] , they assumed the protection of Meccism (Mazdaism) after gaining political power. Thus, Magianism, which had been deprived of state support since the Persians (555 B.C. - 334 B.C.), found a strong support with the Sassanid rule. An important part of the Sassanid rulers made orthodox Magianism a state religion.

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[97] Mingana, *Msha-Zkha*, 123-124; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 6-7; Abona, *Tārih al-Keniseti al-Sharqiyya,* 1/34-36.
[98] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 8-9; Abona, *Shuhedā' al-Mashrik*, 158-163; *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/36-37.
[99] Fiey, *Jalons*, 66-72; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/33-36.
[100] Richard N. Frye, "The Political History of Iran Under the Sassanids", *The Cambridge History of Iran,* 3(1)/121.

and gradually achieved the integration of religion and state. Although Magianism regarded itself as the true religion and other faiths as superstitions,[101] Sassanid rulers tolerated different religious traditions under their rule as long as they did not pose a threat to the political administration or to the Iranian popular strata adhering to the Magian religious tradition. However, as soon as different religious traditions emerged as rivals to Magianism, they were persecuted by rulers guided by Magian clerics.

In the early period of Sassanid rule, Christians were a very active religious group in different parts of the country. Ardeshir I (226-241), the founder of the state, abandoned the Parthian capital of Ktesiphon and fortified Seleucia, establishing a new city called Wah-Ardeshir next to it. The Church of Kokhe remained within the borders of this new city and gradually began to gain influence over other churches.[102] Shapur I (241-272) took northern Mesopotamia and Syria under his rule as a result of his wars with Rome (244-260) and wreaked havoc in the Antioch region. During these campaigns, many Roman captives were captured, including important figures such as the Roman Emperor Valerian (253-260) and Demetrius (257), bishop of Antioch.[103] The Christian population living in the lands taken from the Roman Empire and the Christians among the captives increased the Christian population under Sassanid rule. Shapur I used these captives to build many cities, especially Gundishapur, and settled the Roman captives there. Nestorian chronicles r e p o r t that the number of these Roman Christians increased over time and they built many churches and monasteries in the Sassanid country. The Christians encountered in Rome

Contrary to the oppression, they freely carried out their religious activities here. In fact

[101] Gherardo Gnoli, "Zoroastrianism", *The Encylopedia of Religion*, ed. by Mircea Eliade et al, (New York - London: Macmillan Publishing Company - Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1987), 15/589.
[102] Albert Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Sharqiyya,* 1/25-26. Wah Ardeshir and Rev Ardeshir are two different cities and should not be confused.
[103] Frye, "The Political History of Iran Under the Sassanids", 125-126.

When Demetrius, the bishop of Antioch, died, they elected a new bishop to replace him. Thus, two churches emerged in Persia, the indigenous Christian church using the Syriac/Aramaic liturgy and the Roman Christian church using the Greek liturgy.[104] One was the church of the indigenous Christians in Kirman and the other was the church of the Roman Christian captives in Rev-Ardeshir, which used Greek liturgy.[105]

In order to understand the activities of Judeo-Christian religious communities in the early years of the Sassanids, Mani (216-277) and his religious doctrine, which emerged in this period, are important for our subject. During and after the period of the change of power, there were many religious traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, Sabianism and Magianism in the Southern Mesopotamia region, including Ktesiphon-Seleucia. In addition, gnostic ideas[106] , which accept discovery and inspiration as the source of true knowledge and, in parallel, argue that salvation can only be realized through knowledge gained through intuition, have also become quite widespread. In such an environment, Mani grew up in a Jewish Christian community called Elkasai, where gnostic elements were dominant. Later, he left this community and began to synthesize the teachings of different religious traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, Sabianism, Magianism and Buddhism with gnostic elements to formulate a new religious doctrine and declared his prophethood as of the last period of Ardashir I. Mani, who made various travels, made his first trip to India. On this journey, he visited Christian communities using the route of the Apostle Thomas. The *Acts of Thomas the Apostle*, a Gnostic work, is thought to have been influential on Mani. On his return to Iran, he met Shapur I, who ascended to the throne, managed to influence him and thus gained the king's patronage. His new doctrine incorporated elements from various

religions;

[104] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 63-65; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/26-27.
[105] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/29. The Roman Christian captives continued to exist until they melted among the local Christians. In the text narrating the story of the murder of Patriarch Mar Sham'un Bar Sabbai during the reign of Shapur II, it is reported that his body was buried in Karxa Leydan by these Roman Christians. Abona, *Shuhedâu "l-Mashrik*, 136; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 128.
[106] Ömer Mahir Alper, "Irfaniyye", *DIA* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 2000), 22/444-445.

He began to spread it through his apostles such as Thomas, Addai and Mari, whose[107] names recall the first Christian missionaries of the East. Shapur I protected Mani, much to the discomfort of the Meccan clergy, believing that this teaching, which incorporated elements from different religious traditions, would play a positive role in expanding the borders of the country. This situation worried the Meccan clergy. Especially the fact that Manichaeism did not favor the institution of marriage caused reactions among the Meccan subjects. However, despite all these, Shapur I and his successors continued their activities without facing any pressure until the early periods of Hormuz I (270-271), Bahram I (271-274) and Bahram II (274-293). Manihezim, who had a well-developed missionary organization, presented Mani as "the spiritual son of Zoroaster" to the Magi, "the Buddha of the future" to the Buddhists and "the Paraclete" to the Christians, which enabled him to reach beyond the borders of the country to Egypt, Anatolia, Europe and Asia Minor. So much so that in the IVth century it became the greatest rival of Christianity.[108] The Meccan clergy, who were disturbed by Manichaeism's ideas on family, marriage and virginity, as well as its easy access to the Meccan masses by using elements of Zoroastrianism, began to be disturbed by the tolerance shown to Manichaeism by the state. Under the leadership of the Meccan abbot (Mobedan-e Mobed) Kartir, the Meccan clergy, who established influence over the government, dominated the state and ensured that Meccanism became the official religion of the state. As a result, Bahram II (274-293) ended the tolerance of Mani and Manichaeism; Mani was killed in 277 and his followers were strictly persecuted. This policy change was not only directed against the Manichaeans, but almost all religious traditions under Sassanid rule faced repression. This is reflected in the

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[107] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 68.

[108] G. Widengren, "Manichaeism and Its Iranian Backgroud", *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 3(2)/965-990; Gherardo Gnoli, "Mani", *The Encylopedia of Religion*, 9/158-160; J. G. Davies, "Manichaeism: An Overwiew, Manichaeism and Christianity", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 9/161-171; Şinasi Gündüz, "Manichaeism", *DİA* (Ankara: TDV Publications, 2007), 27/575; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 67-69, 73, 76; Jeff
W. Childers, "Mani" *GEDSH*, 261.

It is expressed most clearly in the Naqsh-e Rustam inscriptions. Kartir mentions that he destroyed Jews (yhwdy), Buddhists (shmny), Hindus (blmny), Nazarenes (n "sl "y), Christians (klystd "n), Mandaeans (mktky), Manichaeans (zyndyky) and their temples.[109]

Nestorian chroniclers regarded Mani as a heretic among the Eastern Christians and his teachings as a form of Christianity mixed with other religions. According to them, Christians continued their activities freely until the reign of Bahram II, and even the ruler treated Christians well in the early days, as he was raised by Christian teachers. But later he came under the influence of Kartir and changed his attitude towards Christians. Thus, Christians were likened to Manichaeans and persecuted by the Sassanids and the mobeds. Because the similarities between the marriage, celibacy and asceticism of the Christian clergy and the Manichaeans gave the impression that the two groups were the same.[110] According to these chronicles, the persecution of Christians during the reign of Bahram II was due to their confusion with the Manichaeans. In reality, however, this was not a case of Christians being persecuted as a result of a misunderstanding that they were likened to Manichaeans. Because, as it is understood from the inscriptions of Kartir[111] , one of the rare Iranian personalities who ensured the acceptance of Magianism as the official religion, oppressed other religions and whose written tablets have survived to the present d a y except for the Sassanid rulers, not only Christianity and Manichaeism were oppressed, but all other religious traditions were o p p r e s s e d . Therefore, during the reign of Bahram II (274-293)

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[109] These readings are by Harold W. Bailey. See J. Duchensne-Guillemin, "Zoroastrian Religion" *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 3(2)/907-908; Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 58.

[110] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 76-77; *Tarihu Kaldo ve Assur*, 2/22-24; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Sharqiyya,* 1/30-31. This is not only limited to church chronicles, but also in theological texts, Mani is often seen as a Christian heretic. The letter of Isho'yahb Jidali (Isho'yahb II of Gdala) on Christology is a case in point. See Lois Sako, *al-Batrik Isho "yab al-Jidali, Hayatuhu wa Risaletuhu "l-Lahutiyya*, (Baghdad: 2014), 29.

[111] Sivrioglu, "Sassanid Empire", 35-36.

It is understood that the Christians, especially the community of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, faced persecution and the community in the capital was left without a head for a while. This suggests that the chronological gap between Shahlupa and the Pope may be related to the oppression during this period.

Another important point to be emphasized here is the existence of gnostic ideas among the Judeo-Christian communities in the early periods of Eastern Christianity.[112] This religious-philosophical movement adopted by Christian thinkers such as Valentinus, Basilides and Marcion[113] found many adherents in Syriac/Aramaic Christian circles. Eastern Christian chronicles and early Eastern Christian literature mention the spread of these ideas among Syriac/Aramaic Christians, especially through Tityanus, Bardaysan and Mani, and condemn them and their teachings. In Proof 3, Afrahat accuses Valentinus, Mani and Marcion of being heretics.[114] Mar Efrem (d. 373), one of the most important figures of Eastern Christianity, fought against the teachings of Bardaysan, Marcion and Mani throughout his life and many of his discourses against them have survived to the present day. According to him, Bardaysan is the master of Mani.[115] Therefore, the struggle against the views of Tityanus, Bardaysan and Mani by the spokesmen of the dominant understanding of Christianity among the Syriac/Aramaic Christian community from the IVth century onwards and

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[112] For more information, see Şinasi Gündüz, "Paul's Theology: Gnostic Elements", *Dinî Araştırmalar* 2/6 (January-April 2000), 51-75.

[113] Valentinus, Basilides and Marcion were the most influential writers of the Gnostic movement in the Christian world in the second century. The origin of this movement is attributed to Iranian, Hellenistic and Jewish traditions or a mixture thereof, as well as to the interpretation of Christian doctrine with these traditions. See Turhan Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity, The Political and Intellectual History of the Doctrine of Jesus in the East* (Istanbul: Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları, 2009), 25-29.

[114] Ayşe Hacımustafaoğlu, *Afrahat "ın Fifth Proof* (Mardin: Artuklu University, Institute of Languages Living in Turkey, Department of Syriac Language and Culture, Master's Thesis, 2018), 24; It is known that Marcion's views reached especially Urfa from the end of the second century and gathered a significant following among the Assyrians. Mar Efrem establishes a connection between Marcion, Bardaysan and Mani. However, it is known that Bardaysan rejected Marcion's views in his work. Rompay, "Marcion", 267.

[115] For their related discourses, see Sebastian P. Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature, A Short Framework", (ed., ed. and trans. Kutlu Akalın - Zafer Duygu, *Syriac Literature* (Mardin: Artuklu University Press, 2017), 103-104.

When the refutations are taken into account, it is understood that gnostic tendencies were also widespread among the Syriac/Aramaic community.

2.3. Formation of the Eastern Church

According to Nestorian chronicles, there was no persecution of Christians during the reigns of Bahram III (293), Narseh (293-302) and Hormuz II, who followed Bahram II.[116] This situation continued until the early years of the reign of Shapur II (309-379).

In the context of the debates around the episcopal see of Ktesiphon-Seleucia in the IVth century, relatively more solid data on the institutionalization of Christians under the Sassanids emerge. After a long period without a head, the community of Ktesiphon-Seleucia began to recover. Pope bar Aggai (c.310-329) began to lead the community, assuming the chair of bishop of the capital, which had been vacant since the death of Shahlupa. Until this time, there were various disputes between the dioceses under Sassanid rule, which had no hierarchical relationship with each other and continued to exist autonomously, and the diocese of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, which was beginning to excel as an archdiocesan center.[117] Although the sources agree about the dispute between the Pope and the other bishops, they differ on the context of the dispute. It seems to be centered around the Pope's attempt to establish the primacy of his own see over the other bishops, or the way he used his power as the bishop of the most important city in the empire.[118] According to the *Acts of Mar Miles (*d. 345), a narrative about the life of Mar Miles (d. 345), the bishop of Susa, who was the leader of the bishops who opposed the Pope, the Pope began to draw reaction due to his mismanagement. In this narrative, the Pope is portrayed with very negative characteristics. The opposition bishops gathered under the leadership of Mar Miles, deposed the Pope and replaced him with his deputy Mar Shem'un bar Sabbai.

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[116] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 89-90; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/30-32.
[117] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/36.
[118] Lucas Van Pompay, "Papa bar "Aggai", *GEDSH*, 320-321.

They chose him to be their bishop.[119] In Proof 14 of the Apostle's Creed, without mentioning names, "we had a brother whom Christ appointed over his house and placed a crown on his head. But because of his mismanagement and boasting, he was removed from his position. Although he was rejected by his own people, he received support from foreign leaders." It has been argued that these statements probably refer to these debates.[120] In this regard, the *Acts of* Afrahat and *Mar Miles* give parallel accounts. These discussions are handled differently in the minutes of the Dadişo" Council (424). According to this, during the reign of Mar Pope, some malicious bishops rebelled against him and his authority was nullified. However, the Pope presented the situation to the western fathers and asked for their help. The Western Fathers reversed this decision and supported the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia, stating that the Pope was appointed by Christ and could only be removed by him.[121] The minutes of the Council of Dadişo" portray the Pope in a positive light.[122] There are different reports in the sources that the Pope left his post and handed it over to Mar Shem'un bar Sabbai, or that he remained in office until his death, after which Shem'un bar Sabbai took the episcopal chair. At the same time, different dates are given for exactly when these disputes took place and when the Pope died.[123] It is likely that the controversy and the removal of the Pope took place in 325, but although he was replaced by Mar Shem "un bar Sabbai, he continued in office until his death in 329.[124]

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[119] For the debate between Mar Miles and the Pope, see Abona, *Shuhedâu "l-Mashrik*, 159-160; *Tarihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/37-38; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 122.
[120] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/39; Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century", 78.
[121] *Synodicon Orientale*, 289-292. Among the western fathers with whom the Pope exchanged letters, the name of Sa'da, the bishop of Urfa, is mentioned. For *the* correspondence of the Pope compiled in the Vth century, see Oscar Braun, "Der Briefwechsel des Katholicos Papa von Seleucia", *Zeitschrift für Katholiche Theologie* 18/ 3 (1894), 163-182, 546-565.
[122] The Pope is also portrayed in a positive light in the Siirt Chronicle. Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 122.
[123] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 8-9; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 13-15; Bar Habraus, *al-Tārih al-Kenise,* 2/6; Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 122.
[124] Pompay, "Papa bar "Aggai", 320-321.

As can be understood from all these accounts, Christians living in a relatively free environment under Sassanid rule at the beginning of the IVth century experienced various intra-church disputes and a leadership crisis emerged in the capital diocese. Whether these disputes stemmed from the Pope's style of governance or the capital diocese's attempt to unite the other dioceses under its leadership, they in any case reveal the loose structure of the dioceses under Sassanid rule. At the same time, the influence of the diocese of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, both because of its location in the capital and because of its attribution to Mar Mari, seems to have increased and it became prominent among the dioceses under Sassanid rule.[125] This shows that the Eastern Church had made significant progress in terms of institutionalization. As a result, the Sassanid administration began to recognize the capital diocese as the representative of the Christian people.

2.4. Shapur II and the Period of Repression

IV. The change in the Roman Empire in favor of Christianity in the first half of the century caused the Sassanids to reconsider their policies towards the Christians under their rule. The Christians, who had not faced any systematic oppression until this period[126] , faced severe oppression for the first time. The Roman Emperor Constantine I (306-337) granted Christians religious freedom with the Edict of Milan (313) and then granted them various political privileges and state patronage. With many new regulations and councils, the process of Christianization of the state accelerated.[127] The religious change in the Roman Empire attracted the attention of Shapur II and his attitude towards the Christians under his rule changed. During this process, Armenian and

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[125] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/40.

[126] In the period until the reign of Shapur II, only during the reign of Bahram II there are some isolated persecutions against the members of the Eastern Church. Brock, "The Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century", 79.

[127] For Constantinius I and the Christianization process of the Roman Empire, see Zafer Duygu, *Christianity and Empire, Church-State and Christology Paradigms in Late Antiquity* (Istanbul: Divan Kitap, 2017), 174-205.

The fact that the Georgian kings were Christians turned Christianity into an important political argument in the rivalry between the two states.[128] Shapur II must have thought that the Christians under his rule would be incited against him by Rome and that the Christians would respond positively. As a matter of fact, developments soon revealed that his suspicions were justified. [129]It is noteworthy that the "Persian sage" Afrahat, who lived during this period and was an important religious figure of the Eastern Christians, in his work *Tahwyata* (Proofs), expressed his belief that the Christian emperor emerging in the west would surely succeed and that no one could overthrow the kingdom of the Sons of Esau (Rome), which shows that the Eastern Christians began to support Christian Rome from within.

During the reigns of the Sassanid rulers after Bahram II (274-293), Armenia and Northern Mesopotamia came under the rule of the Roman Empire and the Tigris River became the border. Shapur II (309-379), who ascended to the throne as a child, put an end to the turmoil in the country after long struggles and focused on taking the lands taken by Rome under Galerius (305-311). Therefore, war broke out between the two empires and the Sassanids took Armenia in 336. Constantine I began preparations for war against Shapur II, but his death in 337 interrupted this military campaign. Shapur II then went on the offensive to recapture the area east of the Tigris River and northern Mesopotamia. However, he was unable to take Nusaybin, even though he had it under siege (338). With the counterattack of Constantine II (337-361), Shapur II's military activities failed and he had to retreat. However, in the wars that continued afterwards, he regained all the lost territories including Nusaybin and signed a peace treaty with Rome. During this period

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[128] Sivrioglu, "Sassanid Empire", 39.

[129] John Gwynn, "Demonstrations of Aphrahat", in *NPNF2-13. Gregory the Great, Ephraim Syrus, Aphrahat,* ed. Philip Schaff - Henry Wace (New York, Oxford and London: The Christian Literature Company, 1898), 352, 361.

The Sassanids were at their strongest and Shapur II became the greatest Sassanid ruler. During all these wars, the Christian population in the regions taken from Rome supported the Romans with all their hearts, and the Christians under Sassanid rule wished the Romans to win the war. In this situation, the Sassanid government considered the Christians, who were their subjects, as enemies. Especially Constantine I's sending a letter to Shapur II shortly before his death, which did not comply with diplomatic rules, asking for the protection of Christian subjects and Shapur II's retreat after the failed siege of Nusaybin seem to have triggered this situation. Thus began a very difficult period for Sassanid Christians under Shapur II between 339-379, which was characterized by widespread persecution and systematic oppression.[130]

In Proof 21, written in 344, Afrahat likened the massacres of this period to the persecution of Christians by the Roman Emperor Diocletian (285-305). According to him, the real massacres began after the destruction of their churches. From what he reports, it is understood that there was a large Christian population under the Sassanid rule and that they were prosecuted and killed on charges of treason.[131] The narratives in the martyrdom compilations known as "Martyrdom Literature" in the Eastern Christian tradition, which contain the stories of Christians martyred during this period, are very important in terms of shedding light on this period, even if they are mixed with legends. Especially the compilation about Mar Shem "un bar Sabbai, who became the bishop of Ktesiphon- Seleucia after the death of the Pope and was the spiritual leader of the Sassanid Christians, is important for our subject. Because the forty-year period of persecution called "Erbain" actually began with his murder. This

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[130] Brock, "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties", 1-5; "The Sasanian Empire Until the VIth Century", 79; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/41-42; Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik*, 372- 377; Alıcı, "Sasanian Empire", 45; Touraj Daryaee, "Shapur II", *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (Accessed June 30, 2019).

[131] John Gwynn, "Demonstrations of Aphrahat", 401-402; The church referred to here is the Kokhe Church in the capital, which was destroyed in 339 during the arrest of Mar Shem "un Bar Sabbai. This suggests that the worst massacres took place in 344. Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 105-137.

According to the compilation, when Shapur II was in the Ahwaz region after the failed siege of Nusaybin, he sent a letter to the rulers in Ktesiphon-Seleucia, asking them to arrest Shem'un, whom he called the leader of the Christians (Resa d-Nasraye)[132] , and not to release him until he signed a pledge to collect and pay jizya and additional taxes from the Christian people living under Sassanid rule. The letter continued, "While the fatigue of war has fallen on our share, their share has been comfort and prosperity. They live in our land but follow the religion of our enemy, the (Roman) emperor."[133] When the letter was placed in front of Mar Shem, he replied that he was ready to do the ruler's bidding, but since he was not a worldly sultan, he could not perform a worldly act such as collecting taxes. When the situation was presented to Shapur II, he ordered that Mar Sham'un be sent to him and his church destroyed. Mar Shem'un and many clergymen in his entourage were taken to Karxa Ladan in the Ahwaz region where Shapur II was located. Here, Mar Shem'un was interrogated in the presence of Shapur II and the ruler had long dialogues with him. In these dialogues, he was accused of treason, inciting the Christian people to revolt, disobeying the ruler's orders regarding taxation, disrespecting the sun and fire, and not prostrating in the presence of the king. In response, Mar Shem'un bar Sabbai said that he was loyal to the ruler and just laws, that he was not a tax collector but the spiritual leader of the Christians. As a result, Mar Shem'un and one hundred members of his clergy were executed on April 14, 341.[134] Later, in early 342, Mar Shahdost, bishop of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, and 128 of his clergy companions were killed.[135] While Shapur II was in Ktesiphon-Seleucia, another 120 Christian clergymen were killed.[136] Finally, Mar Barba'shemin, who succeeded Mar Shahdost, was killed 16

[132] Brock, "Some Aspects of Greek Worrds in Syriac", 94.
[133] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 107.
[134] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 105-137.
[135] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 164-166.
[136] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 171-174

After imprisoning the clergy for a year, he killed him in 346.[137] From then on, the episcopal chair in Ktesiphon-Seleucia remained vacant and was only re-established after the death of Shapur II. The final act of persecution was the murder of Bishop Akabshama and his friends in 379.[138]

According to Christian chronicles and martyrdom compilations, thousands of Christians were killed during this forty-year period of persecution, including many bishops, clergy, clergymen, Iranian nobles who became Christians, military commanders and artisans.[139] According to these sources, the regions where Christians were most persecuted were Erbil, Kirkuk, Mosul, Nusaybin, Ktesifon-Seleucia and Ahwaz. The fact that the prosecutions were especially concentrated in Northern Mesopotamia was due to the fact that the region was on the border and Sassanid military forces were stationed there due to the war.[140] Christian chronicles and martyrdom narratives agree that these persecutions during the reign of Shapur II generally began after the death of Constantine I. According to them, Shapur II did not start these prosecutions because he was afraid of the emperor and only dared to do so after his death. According to these sources, Shapur II committed these persecutions especially with the suggestion of Jews and Magi.[141] When this period is evaluated in general, it is possible to attribute Shapur II's policies towards Christians to two reasons. First, the gradual Christianization of the Roman Empire and its protection of Christians caused the Sassanids to worry about their own Christian population. Secondly, the Sassanids wanted to fill the state treasury, which had been emptied due to the wars with Rome, with jizya and additional taxes to be collected from Christians.

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[137] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 174-177.
[138] Abona, *Shuheda al-Mashrik*, 239-254.
[139] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 17-27; Mshiha Zha, *Erbil Vakayinamesi*, 121-135; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 115, 122-129, 132-133, 219-224.
[140] Abona *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/48.
[141] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 115, 123

After his first expedition to Rome, Shapur II besieged Nusaybin in 346 and 350, but again failed to capture it. However, in 359, he entered Northern Mesopotamia through Armenia and captured Diyarbakir. Meanwhile, the power in the Roman Empire changed and Julian (Iulianus) (361-363) came to the throne. Although this ruler marched against the Sassanids with his army, he was killed near Ktesiphon-Seleucia in 363. His successor, Jovian (Iovianus) (363-364), signed a peace treaty with Shapur II and the war stopped. As a result, the Sassanids regained all the territories they had lost and Nusaybin, which was considered an outpost of Rome under the treaty, was abandoned to the Sassanids.[142] The rich and cultured Christians here left the city. One of those who left the city and settled in Urfa was Mar Efrem (d.373), one of the most important religious figures of early Eastern Christianity. Although the oppression continued in a low tone during the reign of Ardeshir II (379-383), who succeeded Shapur II, good relations were established with the Roman Emperor Theodosius (379-395) during the reign of Shapur III (383-388). According to Nestorian chronicles, during this period, the persecution of Christians stopped, those who had been arrested were released[143] and Tomarsa (384-393) and then Qiyoma (395-399) succeeded Tomarsa (384-393) and then Qiyoma (395-399) to the Catholicosate (casalik), which had been vacant for forty years.[144] However, the information about these two bishops does not seem to be reliable. Because this period is quite dark in terms of church history. Even if these two names are not fictitious, their rule must have covered only Ktesiphon-Seleucia.[145] Because the Council of Dadişo

The mention in the minutes of (424) that Mar Isaac had re-established the clerical hierarchy over the Christian people twenty-two years earlier [146]

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[142] Frye, "The Political History of Iran Under the Sassanids", 137-140.
[143] Ensuring the participation of Christians in economic life and enabling them to pay taxes to the state seems to be an important reason for the release of imprisoned Christians. Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 247.
[144] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 28-30; Amr b. Matta, *Ahbāru Fetārika*, 21-23; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 276.
[145] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/55-57.
[146] *Synodicon Orientale*, 291.

It shows that there was no such authority over the community. When this period is evaluated in general, it is understood that the Sassanid Christians made progress in the context of establishing the church hierarchy from Mar Papa and spread it over a wide area. Despite all the blows taken during the persecution period, this structure was able to recover and transitioned towards a more organized church hierarchy with Mar Ishaq. Another important development of this period is that despite all these oppressions, two important figures in the Eastern Christian tradition such as Afrahat and Mar Efrem were raised.

2.5. The Common Heritage of Eastern Christianity before the Council of Chalcedon (451)

In the first century, when Christianity emerged, Syriac/Aramaic communities spread over a large region such as Syria and Mesopotamia and used various dialects of Aramaic. The Syriac/Aramaic dialect spoken in Edessa (Urfa), the center of the Osrohonne region, which stands out as one of the important centers where Christianity spread east of the Euphrates, began to come to the forefront as a language of literature and religion and began to develop as a written language among Syriac/Aramaic communities.[147] Although some Syriac religious texts dating to the II and III centuries have survived, it is very difficult to determine the dates and authors of many of these works. The most important text of this literature is undoubtedly the Peshitta, the Syriac translation of the Old Testament. The first nuclei of this translation (the first five books) were translated directly from Hebrew. It was later supplemented with additions from Aramaic and Greek copies of the Old Testament. Although there are different opinions about whether it was translated in Urfa or Erbil, it was translated by Syriac (Aramaic) speaking Jews and later by Christian Assyrians.

[147] Syriac/Aramaic spread as the Lingua Franca in the Middle East from the VI century BC to the VII century AD. Lucas Van Rompay, "Aramaic", *GEDSH*, 28-30. For detailed information on Aramaic, see Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 16-23.

The first Syriac translation of the New Testament was the Diatessaron, a single variant of the four Gospels by Tityanus.[148] The first Syriac translation of the New Testament was the *Diatessaron*, a compilation of the four Gospels in a single variant by Tityanus. It is not known whether the original language of this translation was Greek or Syriac.[149] Even if it was translated from Greek, it seems to have made use of a text different from the New Testament texts currently in use. For example, the sentence about John mentions that he drank milk and ate honey, whereas the Greek Gospels refer to it as locusts and wild honey.[150] Until the V century, Eastern Christians used the *Peshitta* and *Diatessaron* texts extensively for the Old and New Testaments. The earliest copies of Syriac translations of the New Testament (the four Gospels) date to the V century and are estimated to have been translated in the III or IV century. *Peshitta* is used for references to the Old Testament in these translations. From the Vth century onwards, translations of the Old Testament and the New Testament from Greek into Syriac began to be used.[151] Other important anonymous Syriac works of the early period include the *Songs of Solomon*, the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Acts of Thomas the Jew*. Besides Tityanus, another important Syriac writer of the period is Bardaysan (154-222). He is very important in terms of providing the first examples (in verse and prose) of Syriac Christian literature. However, only his *Book on the Laws of Countries* has survived.[152]

Syriac artifacts from the II and III centuries are very important for identifying both the characteristic features of early Eastern Christianity and the basic elements of the common heritage of Syriac/Aramaic Christianity before the schism. The discovery of the Qumran (Dead Sea), the Nag Hammadi documents and the Mani Codex, and the use of these texts

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[148] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 40; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 90; Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 10-11.
[149] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 41-42; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 91.
[150] Mark, 1/6. C. E. Morrison, "Exegesis, New Testament", *GEDSH*, 161.
[151] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 42-44; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 91-92.
[152] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 52-58; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 92.

After comparative studies with early Syriac/Aramaic Christian religious literature, new assessments of the origins and character of Syriac/Aramaic Christianity have begun to emerge. Accordingly, it is now recognized by many scholars that the assertion that Syriac/Aramaic Christianity and its various sects were simply formed by a Hellenistic Christian movement centered in Antioch, as previously thought, is not true.[153] Syriac Christianity was influenced by three main cultural traditions: Jewish, Greek and ancient Mesopotamian. The influence of the Jewish and ancient Mesopotamian traditions was most prominent in the IVth century, while in the Vth century and beyond, the Greek culture rapidly increased its influence to the detriment of the other two.[154] We have already mentioned that Christianity, as reported by the chronicles of the Eastern Church, was brought to the eastern bank of the Euphrates and the regions of Northern and Southern Mesopotamia by Christians of Jewish origin and first found adherents among the Jewish circles there. There had been a significant Jewish population in this region since the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles. As a result of the unsuccessful Jewish revolts against the Roman Empire between 66-70, 115-117 and 132-135 AD, this number increased even more with new Jewish migrations from the Jerusalem region to Parthian-ruled Babylon and Northern Mesopotamia. These Jewish revolts seem to be linked to the Parthian-Roman wars. Jews living in the Roman Empire and having problems with their own state were supported by the Parthians. Likewise, the Jews also supported the Parthians against Rome.[155] The fact that the Judaizing ruling class of the Parthian satrapy of Adiabene (Erbil) supported the revolt of the Jews of Jerusalem (66-70 AD)[156] shows this mutual relationship and the Jewish colonies.

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[153] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 3-19; St. Ephrem the Syrian. *Selected Prose Works*, 10-11.
[154] Sebastian P Brock, "Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources", *Studies in Syriac Christianity*, part IV (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), 212.
[155] J. Neusner, *Jews in Iran*, 909-910.
[156] For more information, see Flavius Josephus, *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Trans. by. William Whiston,
A.M. Auburn and Buffalo John E. (Beardsley: 1895), Book. 20. Chapter. 17-94.

It is very interesting in terms of revealing its effectiveness. While Palestinian Judaism under the Roman Empire entered a period of decline, the Jews under the Parthians and later under the Sassanids entered a period of significant development in a freer and freer environment. From the III century onwards, they opened many academies and began to compose the Babylonian Talmud.[157] Therefore, it is understood that the religious literature of Christianity of the second and third centuries, which first began to spread among the Jews and through them among the Syriac/Aramaic communities who spoke the same language as them, had a Judeo-Christian character and had a Christian understanding in which Jewish tendencies were dominant.[158] In fact, until the Roman Empire adopted Christianity, Jews and Christians in the Iranian geography were not distinguished from each other, and Christianity was seen as a subgroup of the Jews. But after Rome became Christian, it became clear that the two groups were different from each other.[159] By the IVth century, however, they were irrevocably alienated from each other and became partners of two rival super-states. Under the Sassanids, the Jews appear to have been stronger both economically and politically. In contrast to the large synagogue at Dure-Europos, the Christians had a small chapel resembling a house.[160] The Jewish tradition appears primarily in Syriac literature in four main areas:

(1) Mostly in the Syriac translations of the Old Testament, especially the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) and Chronicles.

(2) In targumic traditions not found in the extant Peshitta text of the Bible but known to early Syriac writers.

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[157] After the Jewish revolt, some Jewish clergymen settled in the vicinity of Babylon and Nusaybin and opened educational institutions. J. Neusner, *Jews in Iran*, 918.
[158] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 6,11.
[159] Eliyahu Lizorkin, *Aphrahat "s Demonstrations, A Conversation with the Jews of Mesopotamia*, CSCO 642/Subsidia 129 (Lovanii: Peeters, 2012), 5.
[160] Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 19.

(3) In apocryphal and pseudepigrapha (texts attributed to biblical authors but not authenticated) of Jewish origin, which in some cases survive only in Syriac.

(4) In some genres of Syriac literature such as commentaries, poetry, chronicles, Old Testament hagiographies.

Most of the Jewish traditions attested in Syriac literature are found in Syriac writers, especially before the end of the IVth century. The Jewish tradition is especially evident in Afrahat and Mar Efrem.[161] In this respect, there are strong Judeo-Christian rather than Hellenistic elements in the shaping of Eastern Christianity.

Apart from Judaism, ascetic and gnostic teachings were also highly influential on Syriac/Aramaic Christianity. There is an important parallel between asceticism and asceticism in the Qumran texts of the Essenes and the distinctive asceticism predominant in the texts of early Syriac/Aramaic Christianity. In the works of Mar Efrem and Afrahat, as well as in many other works of the early period, this parallelism is noticeable in the mystical terms and community structure used for the ascetic life, and in the terms and community structure used by the Qumran community.[162] At least in the Syriac/Aramaic-speaking region, there seems to have been no break or new beginning between the disciples of Jesus who called to poverty and asceticism and the devoted ascetics who were central to early Syriac literature. The fact that the expression "bnay qyama" used by Afrahat, which refers to an ascetic community in the sense of "Children of the Covenant", is also found in Qumran, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean texts reveals the prevalence of early Judeo-Christianity and that Syriac asceticism was not derived from Egypt.

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[161] Brock, "Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources", 212, 225, 231.
[162] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 11-17; St. Ephrem the Syrian. *Selected Prose Works*, 10-12.

and the Jewish sects, especially the Qumran community. Research in this area shows that ascetic celibacy was not an invention of Christianity, but was widespread among Jewish sects, especially among the Qumran community. The word Kyama (Qyama) has the same meaning as the Hebrew word "berit", which means contract, covenant and testament, and the Qumran community used this name for itself. With the exception of Bardaysan and his followers, almost all early Syriac literature seems to be the product of dedicated ascetics. Although these ascetics were the children of holy marriages, they would never speak of sanctity in a sexually active marriage. Even in the V century, many Christians avoided baptism during active marriages. They had to be encouraged to be convinced that they could be baptized. Here, baptism and celibacy were strongly associated. While there is no doubt about the Jewish background of early Syriac asceticism, its relationship with the Essenes is not entirely clear. At present, only the Qumran community is known to have pre-Christian ascetic characteristics. It is quite possible that there are other ascetic Jewish communities. The Jewish sect known as the Qumran community is largely the origin of both Christian asceticism and Jewish-Christian asceticism.[163]

The characteristics of early Eastern Christianity are most evident in the works of Afrahat and Mar Efrem. These two prominent figures are considered to be the most important representatives of Semitic Christianity of the IVth century, before Hellenism and Greek culture and theology had established their influence on the Syriac-speaking Christian world.[164] Afrahat, known as the Persian sage, is the Syriac version of the name Farhad. He i s estimated to have lived approximately between 270/285-345. Very little is known about his life. Kitab-ı

[163] Robert Murray, "The Exhortation to Candidates for Ascetical Vows at Baptism in the Ancient Syriac Church", *New Testament Studies*, 21/1 (October 1974), 59, 63, 77-80.
[164] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/ 57; Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 9; Brock, "Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources", 225.

He had a simple piety and asceticism based on the Bible. From the various addresses he uses in his work, it is clear that he served in the hierarchy of the Eastern Church, but his exact position is unclear. *The Proofs is a* very important document as it is the earliest extant compiled work that reveals the unique theology and liturgical practices of Eastern Christianity, which was not influenced by the Greek/Roman cultural world. It also sheds light on the relations of Eastern Christians with the Jewish community and Sassanid rule. The first ten proofs of this work, which consists of twenty-three proofs, were written in 337, the eleventh through the twenty-second in 344, and the last in 345.[165] *The proofs* are written in prose with a prose narrative. With sincere and sincere addresses, it gives the impression that he is writing to a close friend. The language is simple and does not contain foreign words. The author, who uses descriptions and comparisons, most of which are based on the Bible, seems to have a wide knowledge of the Bible. The author, who is familiar with the Jewish tradition, responds to their claims against Christians. For quotations from the New Testament, he used only the Diatessaron Gospel of Tityanus. There is no trace in his writings that he was aware of the Council of Nicaea, which took place ten years before he wrote his work.[166]

The first ten chapters of his work generally deal with Christian piety: faith, love, prayer, worship, retreat, repentance, etc. His definition of faith, which is quite simple and straightforward, is as follows:

> "To believe in God, who is Lord of all, who made heaven and earth and the seas and everything in them, who created Adam in his own image, who gave Moses the Torah, who sent his Spirit to the prophets, who sent his Christ into the world, in the resurrection of the dead and in the mystery of baptism. This is the faith of the Church of God."[167]

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[165] For Aphrahat, see. John Gwynn, "Demonstrations of Aphrahat", 345-412; Abona, *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 64-69; Lois Sako, *Abauna "s-Syrians, Hayatuhum, Te "lifuhum, Te "lifuhum, Utruhatuhum ve Nususu Muhtare* (Baghdad: Matbaat al-Eltaf, 1998), 60-73; Sebastian Brock, "*The Syrian Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life*, Cistercian Studies 101 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 1-4; Eliyahu Lizorkin, *Aphrahat "s Demonstrations*.
[166] Lizorkin, *Aphrahat "s Demonstrations*, 2-3.
[167] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 64.

Afrahat does not see faith as a purely theoretical doctrine. In addition, he frequently emphasizes the religious and moral practices that believers should practice in their lives. For this, he emphasizes principles such as fasting, prayer, love, truthfulness, humility, charity, holiness (chastity), chastity, wisdom, simplicity, patience, hospitality, grace and asceticism. Although he uses the term trinity, his understanding of the trinity is theologically quite vague and does not elaborate on each element. He says of the Trinity, "This is what I have said and read: God is one, Christ is one, the Spirit is one, faith is one and baptism is one"[168] . The emphasis on the unity of God and the historical Jesus is strong. He is completely unfamiliar with the technical terms of Christology used at the Council of Nicaea, such as nature, substance, uknum and person.[169] Paul's doctrine of the body of Christ is absent from Afrahat's perception.[170] It is also difficult to find a clear definition of the Holy Spirit in his writings. Sometimes he uses it as the spirit of God, sometimes as the spirit of Jesus, but he also conceives of it as female. About Mary he adheres to the New Testament descriptions without going to extremes. He describes Joseph, Mary's betrothed, as the father (of Jesus without any sexual intercourse). He does not use the title "Mother of God" for Mary. According to him, baptism was instituted by Jesus Christ after he washed the feet of his disciples at the last supper. He associates baptism with the Jewish Passover, which commemorates the Jews' crossing of the Red Sea. Just as the Jews crossed the Red Sea on Passover night and were saved the next day, so Christ washed the feet of His disciples on Passover night and the next day became the day of salvation. According to him, baptism is performed on April 14/15, the date of Passover in the Jewish lunar calendar.[171]

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[168] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 65.
[169] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 63-66.
[170] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 343.
[171] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 66-69.

Undoubtedly the most remarkable thing about Afrahat is that he sheds light on the peculiar asceticism and asceticism of early Eastern Christianity, before the Egyptian monasticism had reached the region. In Proof 6, he speaks of an ascetic community of ascetics called "bnay qyama", of which Afrahat seems to have been a distinguished member, and outlines the moral principles and ascetic practices they were to follow. Although he uses the term "bnay qyama", which literally means "Children of the Covenant", in nine different senses, he mainly means "covenant". Being familiar with the Old Testament tradition and literature, Afrahat adapts the Judaic understanding of the "Covenant People (Israel)" to his Christian community. In this sense, the term "bnay qyama" used by Jesus Christ to refer to the "New Testament People" is actually the Christian equivalent of the Hebrew term "bnay berith" used by the Jews. Thus, by qyama/ahit, which refers to the covenant or vow made with God at baptism, he meant the New Testament community of the Church.[172] The ascetic Esseni community of Qumran also used the term "bnay berith/New Testament" in the same context as the term "bnay qyama".[173] The bnay qyama community is made up of baptized men and women and is dedicated to contemplation, prayer and spiritual struggle. Since institutionalized monastic life has not developed, they do not have their own monasteries or hermitages. They mostly stay with their families or in smaller homogeneous groups, with men and women living in separate places. It is strongly recommended that the men and women of the community never marry and remain virgins. Those who are married are also allowed to participate and commit themselves to a life of asceticism, but are asked to gradually abstain from sexual intercourse.[174]

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[172] George Nedungatt, "The Covenanters of the Early Syriac-Speaking Church", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica (OCP)* 39 (Rome 1973), 215.
[173] Sako, *Abauna "s-Syrian*, 68; David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity*, (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1988), 44; Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 15; Sebastian P. Brock, "Early Syrian Ascetism", *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity,* part I, 7.
[174] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 67-68;

In the second group, the Proofs (11-22), the subject changes abruptly, engaging in polemics against the Jews and combating Judaic tendencies among Christians.[175] It is not clear exactly in which area of Sassanid rule Afrahat lived. But it seems that he lived in an environment where Jews were active, powerful and vibrant. What kind of Jewish community Afrahat discusses is still debated by experts, but from his descriptions it is generally accepted that they were proto-rabbinic Jews. In this context, there are different views that Afrahat lived in Babylon or Erbil and engaged in polemics with the Jews there.[176] According to Neusner, the Old Testament cited by Afrahat is simpler than that compiled by the rabbis in the academies and is characteristically outside the influence of rabbinic doctrine.[177]

Mar Efrem was born in 303/306 in Nusaybin under Roman rule and died in 373 in Urfa, where he spent the last ten years of his life.[178] Mar Jacob (d.338), the bishop of Nusaybin, established an academy in Nusaybin after the Council of Nicaea and appointed Mar Ephrem as its head.[179] This academy, which soon became the most important educational institution for the Christians of the region, became an institution where Christians under Sassanid rule turned to receive education.[180] Nusaybin was also an important city for Jews. At the beginning of the IVth century, apart from the Babylonian Academy, there was almost exclusively a Jewish school in Nusaybin.[181] The school was founded by Mar Jacob,

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[175] Lizorkin, *Aphrahat "s Demonstrations*, 3-8. Brock considers it unlikely that Aphrahat was arguing with actual Jews and thinks that he was more concerned with Christians who were inclined to Judaism or had adopted Jewish practices. Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 99.
[176] Lizorkin, *Aphrahat "s Demonstrations*, 5-10; Kuriakose A. Valavanolickal, *The Use of the Gospel Parables in the Writings of Aphrahat and Ephrem*, (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH, 1996), 29,361; Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom* , 20.
[177] J. Neusner, *Jews in Iran*, 921.
[178] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 268-272, Ephrem's participation in the Council of Nicaea with his teacher James, his presence in Egypt, or his visit to Cappadocia with Basilius of Caesarea are highly doubtful in terms of historical authenticity. See Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 72.
[179] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *The Purpose of Establishing Higher Schools in Mesopotamia*, trans. Adday Sher, trans. Celal Demirci, Adday Sher, *Nusaybin Academy*, trans. Nesim Doru, in (Istanbul: Yaba Publications, 2006), 172.
[180] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 176.
[181] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 18.

It was probably founded on the model of the Jewish School.[182] Mar Efrem's many statements drawing attention to the danger of Judaization of the Christians in Nusaybin are important in terms of showing the influence of the Jews in the city. In fact, in contrast to Afrahat's gentle tone, Efrem draws a more angry polemicist profile against the Jews.[183] In 363, when Nusaybin was abandoned to the Sassanids, the cultured and wealthy gentry of the city, including Mar Efrem, left and settled in Urfa. Here, Mar Efrem reorganized and established the academy that was supposed to have existed before. Teachers from Nusaybin were employed at the Urfa Academy. This academy was called the Persian School, especially because it hosted Christian students under Sassanid rule.[184]

Urfa, where Mar Efrem settled, has a cosmopolitan appearance with many different faith groups. There are many religious groups that follow Bardaysan, Marcion, Valentin, Arius and Mani. Orthodox Christians who adhere to the decisions of the Council of Nicaea are called Palutists.[185] Palut is known as the first bishop appointed to Urfa by the Church of Antioch in the early third century. With his appointment, the efforts to harmonize Eastern Christianity with the Greco-Roman churches gained momentum. Indeed, with him, Greek translations of the New Testament began to be created and used instead of the Diatessaron, but the use of the Old Testament and the New Testament in Peshitta could not be prevented until the Vth century.[186] At the time of Mar Efrem's arrival in Urfa, the least organized and weakest of these groups was the orthodox Christian group called the Palutists.

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[182] J. Neusner, *Jews in Iran*, 918; Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 23
[183] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom* , 18-19.
[184] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 176; Hayes, *Academy of Urfa*, 143, 145-150, 166.
[185] Until the first bishop of Urfa, Kona (Qona) (312), the Christianity of Urfa was considered heretical. In the first three centuries there were many groups in Urfa, such as the pagan star cult, Hellenistic philosophy, gnostic teachings, Bardaysan's syncretic system, Judaism and poorly organized Christianity, and Marcion's followers who tried to separate Christianity from Judaism. See Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 5,7.
[186] Under the leadership of Rabbula, Bishop of Urfa (d. 436), the use of Syriac translations of the four Gospels was made compulsory and the Diatesseron Gospel was banned. Abona, *Al-Adab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 42.

Mar Efrem himself lamented being characterized as a Palutist.[187] He fought fiercely against the teachings he considered heretical and devoted himself to the struggle for the dominance of orthodox Christianity as expressed in the Council of Nicaea and patronized by the Roman Empire. Bardaysan's ideas, in particular, took root among the people. His poems, written to spread his ideas, were often sung in choirs formed by Urfa youth. Efrem, armed with his weapon against Bardaysan, whom he considered a great heretic, began to spread his own poetry. He tried to destroy and neutralize Bardaysan's works as much as he could.[188]

Christianity was first accepted in Urfa among the Jews of the city. The fact that the Peshitta, Diatessaron, the Gospels of Thomas and Philip, the Acts of Thomas the Jew, the Songs of Solomon and gnostic teachings first appeared here reveals the Jewish-Christian profile of the city.[189] The Church of Urfa, which had a Judeo-Christian character in terms of its rituals and traditions and which lived disconnected from the Greco-Roman churches, began to be regularly governed by bishops affiliated with the Church of Antioch from the beginning of the IVth century.[190] The Persian Academy of Urfa, led by Mar Efrem, played an active role in the efforts to harmonize the Church of Urfa with the understanding of Christianity, which had the support of the Roman State. But although Greco-Roman theology found its most ardent adherents among the Syriac/Aramaic Christians, such as Mar Efrem, it was in fact typical of early Eastern Christianity. A simple style, austere piety and very strong asceticism.

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[187] Hayes, *Urfa Academy*, 126-133.
[188] For more on the struggle between the Ephrem and Bardaysan currents, see Hayes, *The Academy of Urfa*, 97. For more information on the struggle of the Ephrem and Bardaysan currents, see ibid., 87-182; Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 54-55.
[189] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 6.
[190] According to the Urfa Chronicle, a reliable source, the first known bishop of Urfa was Kawno (Qawno) (289-313). Zafer Duygu, *STYGA*, 112. The Narrative of Abgar and the Urfa Martyrdom narratives contain accounts that Palut was appointed bishop of Urfa after Aggai. He is thought to have been appointed by Serapion (189-209), Bishop of Antioch. Hayes, *The Academy of Urfa*, 38- 39; 137-139. However, it seems that the Christian community under the bishops of Urfa appointed by the Church of Antioch was weak compared to other groups. However, after the Edict of Milan (313), with the support of the state, it began to dominate other communities.

tendencies are the main ones. In the background of his writings there is a strong influence of both Jewish and Mesopotamian Semitic tradition.[191] He, like Afrahat, has a tradition in which Jewish traces abound. He adapted the Old Testament understanding of the "Covenant People" as the "New People of God" for Christians and used the Peshitta and Diatessaron for biblical quotations. Both authors inherited the midrashic[192] tradition of interpretation and symbolism. Their lack of organized doctrine reflects the mystery of the beginnings of Syriac Christianity, which formed its own lineage from its Jewish roots. Although the process of harmonization of Syriac Eastern Christianity with Roman orthodoxy has begun, Afrahat is still isolated from it. He was preoccupied with Persian persecution and the strong Jewish culture, so he did not focus on heretical groups. But in the Roman lands where Efrem lived, religious understandings outside the orthodox line were seen as a danger. Therefore, Ephrem is in a fierce struggle with them. However, he does not use the method of argumentation in this struggle. For example, instead of giving logical answers to the Arians in Christological terms, he repeats the traditional discourse with quotations from the Bible and only accuses them as heretics.[193] Ephrem's theological method avoids the kind of "precision" informed by Hellenistic philosophical categories that characterizes contemporary theological inquiry. For this reason, his theological writings continued to be used by the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon, Monophysites and Nestorians.[194] Mar Efrem, considered the greatest writer of Syriac, is the most important common heritage of Eastern Christianity, whose hymns have been recited to this day in all the Maronite, Syriac Catholic, Syriac Orthodox, Nestorian, Syriac Malabar and Syriac Malankar churches that use the Syriac language, despite all sectarian differences throughout history.

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[191] Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 9.
[192] Midrash literally means study and interpretation. In the literature, it is used for works that contain the interpretation of the Old Testament in terms of ethics, mysticism and jurisprudence. Baki Adam, *Torah According to Jewish Sources* (Istanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 2015), 25.
[193] Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 341-342.
[194] St. Ephrem the Syrian. *Selected Prose Works*, 46-47.

deeply influenced.[195] The IVth century stands out as a period in which Syriac/Aramaic Christianity came under the complete influence of Christianity represented by the Roman Empire. In this respect, the need for the Christians living under Sassanid rule to adapt their religious beliefs and practices in accordance with the teachings of the orthodox church of this state as an indication of their support for the Roman Empire must have accelerated this transition.[196]

2.6. The Eastern Church Becomes the Official Church

V. century is a very important period for the Eastern Christians in terms of the officialization of their relations with the Sassanid Empire, the establishment of the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia as a patriarchal center and the acceptance of the dominant Christian doctrine prevailing in the Roman Empire. The Eastern Christians, who went through a very difficult period due to the oppressive policies of Shapur II, found themselves in a very different political climate from the beginning of the V century. Yezdigird I (399-421), the Sassanid ruler after Bahram IV, unlike his predecessors, emphasized peace in both the domestic and foreign policies of the state, and as a result, an atmosphere of tolerance emerged. During this period, the Eastern Church began to recover from Mar Ishaq (399-411), who was elected bishop of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, and made a significant progress towards completing its institutionalization with many synods. What makes these developments, which could not have been foreseen until a short time before, interesting is that, as Sebastian P. Brock points out, the request for the organization of the Council of Mar Ishaq, the first council of the Eastern Church, was not made by Mar Ishaq, but by the bishop of Meyafarkin (Silvan), the Roman representative who was conducting peace negotiations between the two empires.

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[195] Hayes, *The Academy of Urfa*, 159; Sebastian Brock, "Introduction to Syriac Studies", in *Horizons in Semitic Studies*, ed. J. H. Eaton (Birmingham, 1980), 30-33; St. Ephrem the Syrian. *Selected Prose Works*, 5-6.
[196] Hayes, *Urfa Academy*, 144.

Marutha (d. IV.-V. century).[197] So, what happened that the Sassanid State, which until a short time ago perceived its own Christian population as a threat due to the Roman Empire's policies of patronizing Christians, allowed a synod, at the request of a Roman representative, to begin the process of the recovery and formalization of the Eastern Church? Before proceeding to evaluate the decisions of the Synod, it will be useful to briefly examine the changing policies of both states and the reasons that developed this process, as well as to recognize the actors of this process in order to understand the situation.

With the Edict of Milan issued by the Roman Emperor Constantine I (306-337), Christians gained a wide freedom of religion and fierce theological debates became more visible. Arius argued that "Jesus" did not have the same substance as the "Father" (God) and indirectly rejected the belief that Jesus was God. With an important group of clergy supporting him, deep divisions emerged within the church. Constantine I convened the Council of Nicaea (325), the first universal church meeting of the Christian world, in order to put an end to these disagreements, to establish religious unity in the country and to control society through the church hierarchy. In this council, the views of Arius were rejected and it was accepted that "Jesus" had the same substance as the "Father". However, during the reign of Constantine II (337-361), who succeeded Constantine I, the views of Arius were supported and this further increased the conflict between the Arians and the supporters of the Council of Nicaea. During this period, Arian views spread among the newly Christianized tribes such as the Goths, Vandals and Lombards. Constantine II also ordered the closure of all pagan temples in the country and banned traditional pagan practices. However, his successor Julian (361-363) ended these practices against pagans during his short reign and

[197] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 81.

He pardoned the supporters of the Council of Nicaea who had been exiled to create a schism between the churches. During the reign of his successor Valens (364-378), the policies of Constantine II were reversed, all anti-Christian and pro-pagan laws were canceled and Arian clergy were supported. During this period, the Church of Alexandria and the Cappadocian Fathers fought against Arianism and supported the decisions of the Council of Nicaea. Theodosius I (379-395), who is considered as one of the important emperors who made important decisions in the history of Christianity, put an end to the Arian policies of his predecessors with his accession to the throne and ordered the decisions of the Council of Nicaea to be implemented throughout the country. In 381, with the Council of Constantinople, he confirmed the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, made Christianity the official religion of the state and formalized the concept of trinity. All other dissenting views, especially Arians, were prosecuted and pagan traditions were completely banned. One of the most important decisions of the Council of Constantinople was the recognition of the Church of Constantinople as the second most important episcopal center after Rome. The elevation of the office of the Bishop of Constantinople led to struggles with the Bishop of Rome on the one hand and with the Bishop of Alexandria for the leadership of the Eastern Christians[198] on the other. All this prepared the ground for new divisions.[199] Another important activity of Theodosius I was to recognize the autonomy of the Goths, who were an important threat to the western regions of the country, and to reduce their negative impact on the capital. Since Arian views had spread among the Goths during this period, missionary activities were carried out to bring them back to the orthodox line.[200]

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[198] This refers to Christians living in the eastern parts of the Roman Empire.
[199] For more information on this process, see Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 52-123; Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 174-309.
[200] Ani Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace between the Roman and Sasanian Empires and its Diverging Impacts on Christianity in Greater Armenia and Iran*, (Los Angeles: University of California, Near Eastern Languges and Cultures, PhD Thesis, 2018), 61, 69.

IV. At the end of the Vth century and the beginning of the Vth century, both the Roman and Sassanid empires were subjected to attacks by the Huns moving westward and the tribes migrating towards Europe in front of them. In 395, the Huns conquered the areas between the two states, such as Armenia, Syria and Mesopotamia. They even came quite close to the Sassanid capital of Ktesiphon-Seleucia.[201] In the same year, Theodosius I divided the Roman Empire between his two sons. Arcadius (395-408) ruled in Constantinople and Honorius (393-423) in Rome. During the reign of Arcadius, especially the western part of the empire went through a very difficult period. He declared his son Theodosius II (408-450), who was still a toddler, as heir apparent and sought the help of the newly enthroned Sassanid emperor Yazdigird I to protect his rights as ruler.[202] In 399, he sent Marutha at the head of a delegation to congratulate Yazdigird I on his accession. Marutha, who had also studied medicine, cured some of the sick in the Sassanid court and thus won the friendship of Yazdigird I. When Arcadius died in 408, he was succeeded as emperor by the seven-year-old Theodosius II. Marutha was again sent as an envoy to Yazdigird I to keep the peace.[203] Since Yazdigird I supported this situation, the two rulers took advantage of the peace between them as much as possible. During this period, especially Western Rome was in great turmoil and Rome was captured by Goths and Visigoths in 410. While the army was interested in this area, the Huns crossed the Daryal Pass and captured the regions up to Urfa and Antioch. Armenia, Cappadocia, Syria and Mesopotamia were adversely affected. The Roman and Sassanid states focused their attention on these attacks due to the attacks they were exposed to. This situation inevitably led to two

[201] Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 59, 64.

[202] Procopius: *Histroy of the Wars Book 1-2,* trans. H. B. Dewing (London: W. Heinemann, New York: The Maxmillan Co., 1914), Chap. II, 8-11.

[203] Many sources mention that he befriended the ruler because of his healing of various patients in the Sassanid court. See Socrates Scholasticus, *History of the Church, in Seven Books*, trans. E. Walford, H. de Valois (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853), Book VII, Chap. VIII; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 29-30; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 284.

and forced them to act together against a common enemy.[204] The key figure in fostering peace between the two states was Bishop Marutha of Meyafarkin.

Of Greek origin, Marutha's ancestors had long been rulers of the Sophene region near Amid (Diyarbakır). In addition to being a clergyman, he was also a ruler.[205] He studied Greek and Syriac as well as medicine[206] and was appointed bishop of Meyafarkin. Marutha was sent as an envoy to the Sassanids several times and stayed there for a long time.[207] When he was sent by Arcadius as an envoy to the Sassanids in the first year of Yazdigird I, it seems that he was instrumental in the appointment of Mar Ishak as bishop of Ktesiphon-Seleucia.[208] In 408, when he was sent as an envoy of Theodosius II, he received permission to collect the remains of the Christians who were killed during the reign of Shapur II because he had won the friendship of Yazdigird I. He brought these remains to Meyafarkin and transferred them to a martyrdom he built there.[209] He then informed Theodosius II about the peace treaty with the Sassanids.[210] He participated in the council convened in 403 by the patriarch of Alexandria, Tefilous, against the patriarch of Constantinople, John of the Golden Mouth (John Chrysostom), and sided with Tefilous. Mar Marutha was mainly concerned with two issues. The first one was to develop peace and cooperation between the two countries against the Hun attacks. As a matter of fact, a strong fortress was built in the region under Marutha's rule with the support of both states.[211] The second issue was the Christians under Sassanid rule. Golden Mouth

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[204] Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 64.
[205] Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 65-66.
[206] According to Wigram, Marutha is the first example of a doctor missionary in history. See W. A. Wigram, *An Introduction to the History of the Assyrian Church: The Church of the Sassanid Empire, 100-640 A.D*. (London: SPCK, 1910), 88.
[207] Abona, *Tarih'ül-Keniset'il Şarkiyye,* 1/58-59; Alıcı, *Sassanid Empire*, 58.
[208] Abona, *Edat al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 92.
[209] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 30-31. Marutha also compiled the narrations of the Christian Martyrs of this period. Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 93; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 116.
[210] Abona, *Tarihu Lügati Aramiyyin*, 91; Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 65-66.
[211] Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 69.

Marutha's name is mentioned in one of John's letters about missionary work among the Goths against the Arians. John mentions that he was specially needed for the work in the Sassanian region.[212] This shows that Marutha was specially entrusted with the affairs of the Christians in the Sassanid region. In 410 he was in the Sassanid capital to deal entirely with the affairs of the Eastern Church. His main mission was to get the Eastern Christians to accept the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, to establish a church hierarchy and to prevent the possible influence of the Arians on them.[213] Mar Marutha asked Yazdigird I to authorize the convening of a council for the Eastern Christians, similar to the councils convened by the emperors under Roman rule. Thus, the Council of Mar Ishaq, which convened in 410, was entirely the result of Mar Mar Marutha's efforts and he was present representing the Western Church.[214] After that, he stayed there for a long time and was instrumental in Mar Aha (410-415) becoming the Catholicos after Mar Ishaq's death. He lived in the Sassanid region until the last period of Mar Yahballaha (415-420) who came after him.[215] During his time here, he tried to influence the Eastern Christians by using his power in the Sassanid court.[216]

Unlike his predecessors, Yazdigird I's tolerance towards different groups under his rule naturally attracted the attention of historians. Unlike other Sassanid rulers, Roman historians of the period had a favorable view of him.[217] Eastern Christian chronicles also generally regarded him as good for Christians.

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[212] John Chrysostom, *Writings of John Chrysostom, Letters to Olympias*, trans. W. R. W. Stephens (New York: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1886), Letter IV.
[213] Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 59
[214] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 30-31; *Synodicon Orientale*, 255; Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 284-285.
[215] His name is not mentioned in the minutes of the Council of Mar Yahballaha (420). This suggests that he may have died shortly before this.
[216] Abona, *Edat al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 93.
[217] Socrates, *History of the Church*, Book VII, Chap. 8, 18; Procopius: *Histroy of the Wars Book 1-2*, 8; Averil Cameron, "Agathias on the Sassanians", *DOP* 23/24 (1969/1970), 127.

as a ruler.[218] Despite the positive image of Yazdigird I in Roman and Eastern Christian sources, he has a negative image in the eyes of Muslim Iranian historians.[219] Although this is attributed to the ruler's policy of tolerance towards Christians and his conflict with the Meccan clergy,[220] this should be viewed with skepticism. Because these artifacts are both dated to the late period and there is no evidence to confirm this situation. Contemporary studies on this period have also dealt with Yazdigird I's policies towards Christians in a manner parallel to Roman historians and Eastern Christian chronicles, and the position and political power of Christians seems to have been overestimated. Here, the Christian community is portrayed as a very important minority, and it is argued that representatives of different religious and ethnic groups in Sassanid society were integrated into the system by appointing them in the bureaucracy, thus creating new aristocracies and balancing them against each other. In order to strengthen the central administration, it is stated that the bishops of the Eastern Church were employed in the imperial bureaucracy and put at the service of the administration. It has even been suggested that these policies of Yazdigird I were the source of the millet system in the Islamic period.[221] However, Yazdigird I's policy of peace and tolerance did not only include Christians. The Jews, for example, took advantage of this environment more actively and rabbinic literature made significant progress.[222] It does not seem correct to attribute Yazdigird I's policies to the support of the Christian community in order to balance the power of the nobles and the Meccan clergy. Because the Christian

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[218] Albert Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/ 60-61; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 294-295.
[219] A. Shapur Shahbazi, "Yazdegerd I", *Encyclopædia Iranica* (Accessed 05.06.2019).
[220] Buyer, *Sassanid Empire*, 58-59.
[221] For some contemporary sources see. Jérôme Labourt, *Le Christianisme dans l "empire Perse: sous la dynastie Sassanide (224-632)* (Paris: Lecoffre, 1904), 104; Arthur Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides,* (Copenhagen: Levin and Munksgaard, 1936), 270; Ze "ev Rubin, "Diplomacy and War in the Relations Between Byzantium and the Sassanids in the Fifth Century AD", in *The Defense of the Roman and Byzantine East*, ed. Philip Freeman and David Kennedy (Oxford: BAR International Editions, 1986), 679; Richard N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran* (Munich: C. H. Beck "sche Verlags-buchhandlung, 1984), 318; Scott McDonough, "*Power by Negotiation: Institutional Reform in the Fifth Century Sasanian Empire*" (Los Angeles: University of California, PhD Thesis, 2005), 140-141, 253-254.
[222] Jacob Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), 5/8-13.

There is no indication that the community performed more important services for the Sassanid administration than the Magian clergy. The responsibilities sometimes assigned to some bishops are insufficient to prove their active participation in state administration. Yazdigird I's attitude towards Christians should be interpreted as a general policy of peace and tolerance at home and abroad. Yazdigird I accepted the invitation of his Christian subjects to establish a church organization similar to the structure of the Christian church in Rome and to convene a synod on the adoption of the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, provided that their loyalty to Sassanid rule was not prejudiced, and contributed to the formation of a sense of unity among Christians on both sides of the border. In this way, he seems to have tried to prevent possible tensions with his Christian subjects.[223]

2.6.1. Council of Mar Isaac (410)

The Council of Mar Ishaq is very important as it was the first large-scale council held by the Eastern Christians and influenced the future of the church. This council was mainly planned by the Roman (Byzantine) Church in the person of the bishop Marutha and carried out with the approval and orders of the Sassanid ruler Yazdigird I. Marutha had the opportunity to get to know the Christian community under Sassanid rule in Persia, where he had been many times. He must have been especially struck by the lack of a centralized administration of the Eastern Christians and the loose relations between the bishoprics. In this respect, he started to work for the establishment of a church organization like the Roman Empire and the unification of church doctrine with Rome. Our main source on this council is the *Synodicon Orientale,* a collection of the minutes of councils held by the Eastern Church from 410 to 775. According to the minutes of the Council of Mar Isaac in this collection

[223] For a broad assessment of the policies of Yazdigird I, see Honarchiansaky , *Study of a Peace*, 10-14, 59-89.

Various bishops in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, such as Porphyrios of Antioch, Achaeus of Aleppo, Pakida of Urfa, Eusebius of Tella, and Achaeus of Amid, wrote a letter through Bishop Marutha to Yazdigird I and the bishops of the Eastern Church. The letter requested permission to hold a universal synod for Christians under Sassanid rule. This was after Marutha had arrived in the Sassanid capital in 408 as an envoy of Theodosius II, who had just ascended the throne. Bishop Marutha first secretly shared this letter with Mar Isaac, the bishop of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, who was described as the catholicos and archbishop of the whole East. The two then coordinated to translate the Greek letter into Pahlavi and present it to Yazdigird I. The Western fathers made three demands:

- That in each diocese there shall be only one bishop, who shall be duly consecrated by three bishops, with a letter from the archbishop of Ctesiphon-Seleucia stating that this consecration has been approved by the archbishop of Ctesiphon-Seleucia.
- Unity with the ecclesiastical calendar of the Roman Church, especially on important dates such as Easter, Lent and Epiphany.
- The acceptance of the formula of faith and other canons adopted at the Council of Nicaea by the bishops in a synod convened by order of the (Sassanid) ruler, if he saw fit.

Yazdigird I approved the convening of a synod and sent an order to his governors to send the bishops of Seleucia, Beth Lapat (Gundishapur), Nusaybin, Euphrates Misan (Basra), Hedyab (Erbil) and Beth Slux (Kirkuk) to the capital. The bishops who arrived in the capital on the feast of Epiphany in the canonical month of Epiphany (January 6, 410) gathered in the great church in accordance with the orders of Yazdigird I. The letter sent by the western fathers was read and they were asked to obey what was written in it.

was ordered. Thus, even at the opening ceremony of the council, the necessary message was given to the bishops who opposed Mar Ishaq. In the first official session, which began on the first Tuesday of February, the forty bishops present were read the three demands that the western fathers wanted to be implemented. Before the bishops could make any evaluation of these demands, Mar Ishaq took the floor and stated that those who did not accept these rules would be excommunicated and would not have any authority in the church, and ensured that the decisions were accepted as they were without any discussion. Then, with Mar Marutha's directives, the adopted text was signed by the bishops. This signed text was submitted by Mar Ishaq and Mar Mar Marutha to Yazdigird I for his approval and was approved by him. Yazdigird I authorized two important members of his entourage to read the sovereign's approval of this text in the presence of the bishops who had been invited to the palace. According to the ruling of Yazdigird I, the period of oppression was over and peace and tranquility had come. Mar Isaac and Mar Mar Marutha played a special role in this. These two would be recognized as the heads of the Christian community and those who disobeyed them would be punished. The creed of the Council of Nicaea was adopted and those who did not accept it would be excommunicated. After the 21 decisions adopted at this council, each bishop went to his own region. These resolutions dealt briefly with the election of bishops, their relations with each other, the number of clergy, their duties and the rules they had to follow, diocesan regions, Christian life, the holding of local synods every two years, the acceptance of the bishop of Ctesiphon-Seleucia as the supreme authority by all bishops by order of the sovereign, the punishment of those who did not comply with this, the adoption of the western liturgy and calendar, the acceptance of the six diocesan regions that had existed before and the determination of their borders.[224] The Council of 410 was the occasion for other, more important

[224] *Synodicon Orientale,* 253-275; M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar "Ishaq AD 410* (Accessed 05. 03. 2019), 1-14. 38 bishops signed the minutes. It is understood that some of these were added later.

The first session also witnessed a development. A few days after the first session, Marutha and Isaac organized a meeting for all the bishops with the Shah, which was perhaps the first time that church-state relations were formalized and regulated.[225]

When we evaluate the Council of Mar Ishaq and its decisions in general, it is understood that although Christianity operated in a wide area under Sassanid rule, it did not have a church organization with a central administration. The authority of Mar Ishaq, the bishop of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, was quite limited. The Western fathers focused primarily on establishing a church organization. Recognizing this situation, Bishop Marutha, as can be seen from the content of the letter, worked to establish an organization similar to the church organization in the Roman Empire in the East with the approval and support of the Western Church and the support of the Sassanid administration. Just as the Council of Nicaea was convened at the call of the Roman ruler, this synod was convened at the call of the Sassanid ruler and the Eastern Church was organized like the Western Church. The bishop of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, who had limited authority, was designated as the head of the church in the form of the catholicos[226] . State power was utilized to ensure the sovereignty of the Catholicos and to establish a hierarchy among the bishops. Along with Mar Ishaq, Bishop Marutha was also given a say in the administration and the Western Church was tried to have authority over the East. However, although this council tried to establish a western-style church order and to extend the authority of the bishop of the capital city, the fact that this problem also emerged in the following councils shows that they were not yet ready for the implementation of these decisions. Approximately one hundred years

[225] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 82.

[226] The use of the title "Catholicos" for Mar Isaac is chronologically incorrect and reflects a later development. The word catholicos or patriarch was not used in the Eastern Church until the Vth century, when the title bishop was used instead. Depending on the influence of the capital city, the bishop of Ctesiphon-Seleucia gained the status of archbishop over other bishops. Jean Maurice Fiey, "Les êtapes de la prise de conscience de son identitê patriarcale par l "êglise syrienne Orientale", *L "Orient Syrien* 12 (1967), 21-22. It may have been borrowed from Roman law, where it was used as a title for tax collectors, or it may have been adopted to indicate that his authority was "Catholic-universal" in Iran. In any case, it is quite clear what place in the hierarchy the catholicos wanted to occupy: It falls between the Patriarch and the Metropolitans. Aubrey R. Vine, *The Nestorian Churches: A Concise History of Nestorian Christiantiy in Asia from the Persian Schism to the Modern Assyrian*, (London: Indepent Press, 1937), 45.

The Council of Nicaea and its decisions are not known to Eastern Christians, although it has passed. With this council, the formula of faith and the decisions of the Council of Nicaea were accepted by the Eastern Christians. Undoubtedly, this should be considered a success for the Western Church in terms of the acceptance of the Nicene doctrine by the Eastern Christians despite the loss of the Goths in favor of the Arians. With this development, the Eastern Church lost its traditional authenticity and came under the guidance of Western Christianity from theology to liturgy. One of the most important results of this council was that the Eastern Church brought its relations with the Sassanid State to an official level. This not only made the church administration visible in the Sassanid bureaucracy, but also enabled the Sassanid State to intervene in the internal affairs of the church.[227]

2.6.2. Council of Mar Yahballaha (420)

Mar Isaac died shortly after the council and was succeeded by Mar Aha (410-415). According to Eastern Christian chronicles, Mar Aha (Ahai) established good relations with the Sassanid administration. Yazdigird I sent him to the Fars region to investigate the seizure of pearl shipments from India and China by pirates. During this mission, he collected the stories of the Christians killed in this region during the reign of Shapur II. After completing his mission, he presented a detailed research report to the ruler. This increased his prestige in the eyes of the ruler.[228] After his death in 415, he was succeeded by Mar Yahballaha (415-421). This bishop was sent by Yazdigird I (418) as an envoy to the Byzantine Emperor Theodisius II.[229] The emperor gave him various gifts,

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[227] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century", 81-82; Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 59; Alıcı, *Sassanid Empire*, 67-68.

[228] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 289. It is understood that Marcion and Mani teachings were active among the Eastern Christians during the reign of Mar Aha and some Christians joined them and sympathized with their works. See the same work, 290.

[229] *Synodicon Orientale,* 277-278; M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Yahbalaha AD 420* (Accessed 09.03.2019), 1.

Marutha accompanied him on his return.[230] At the same time, in 420, a delegation headed by Bishop Akak of Amid was sent to Yazdigird I by Theodosius II. Meanwhile, eleven bishops appealed to Bishop Akak and Mar Yahballaha to convene a council to accept the decisions of the Council of Nicaea and all other councils held in the West. According to them, the Western Church was in peace and order because it was steadfastly following the decisions of these councils, while the Eastern Church was in turmoil and disunity because it was deprived of these decisions.[231] The preface of the minutes of the Dadişo" Council also refers to the council held during the reign of Mar Yahballaha and mentions that many bishops did not accept his authority.[232] In this case, it seems that the Eastern Church was not willing to implement the decisions taken at the Council of Mar Ishaq. The fact that the minutes of the council bear the signatures of twelve bishops along with Mar Yahballaha points to this. In this council, the decisions of the previous council were approved and the decisions of the councils held in the west such as Iznik, Ankara, Niksar, Çankırı, Antakya and Laodicea were accepted. There were disputes between the catholicos and the Bishop of Persia, Ma "na, for not implementing the decisions of the council and not accepting his authority.[233] Shortly after the council, Mar Yahballaha died.

2.6.3. Internal Disturbances in the Eastern Church

After the death of the Catholicos, deep disagreements and factions emerged among the bishops and there was a competition for leadership among bishops such as Ma'na, Ferahbuht and Dadisho. The Persian bishop Ma'na was elected as the new catholicos with the help of some senior Sassanid administrators. His rule was short-lived due to the events described in the Christian chronicles about the punishment of some Christian clergymen during the last days of Yazdigird I. But this

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[230] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 291; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/67.
[231] *Synodicon Orientale*, 279; M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Yahbalaha AD 420*, 1-2.
[232] *Synodicon Orientale*, 293; M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Yahbalaha AD 420*, 2-4.
[233] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 33.

The events should not be interpreted as a systematic repression. A close examination of these events reveals that this situation was not based on a change of policy by Yazdigird I, but rather on the imprudence of some Christian clergymen, who were subjected to individual punishments.[234] Ma'na incurred the wrath of the ruler for not showing sufficient sensitivity in an anti-Majusi action carried out by a priest named Husho, and was stripped of his authority and exiled.[235] After a while, Yazdigird I died and there was a short power vacuum.

Bahram Gor V (421-438), son of Yazdigird I, became ruler after defeating his brothers. In order to ascend to the throne, he had to make some concessions to the Meccan clergy and nobles. In the first year of his rule there was a brief war with the Roman Empire.[236] According to Christian chronicles, during this time Christians were persecuted and some of them crossed the border and sought refuge in Roman territory. The Sassanids wanted these refugees and Rome refused. In 422, just before a major war, the two states signed a new peace treaty. Accordingly, the rights of the Christians under Sassanid rule and the Magi under Roman rule were mutually guaranteed.[237] However, until this peace treaty was concluded, many turmoil and conflicts arose in the Eastern Church due to the inability to fully establish church governance and the pressure of the Sassanid rule.[238] During this period, a bishop named Ferahbuht (Maraboht) was made catholicos after Ma'na with the help of a Sassanid commander, but his authority was not accepted by the bishops and he was deposed. In addition, his and Ma'na's names were also used in the catholicosate.

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[234] For an assessment of Yazdgird I's brief period of repression, see Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 78-82.
[235] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 292-294; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 33.
[236] O. Klíma, "Bahrām V," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (Accessed January 20, 2020).
[237] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 294-296; Socrates, *History of the Church*, Book VII, Chap. 18; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 33-35; Theodoret of Cyrus, "The Ecclesiastical History", *NPNF2-03,* (New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1892), Book: 5, Chap. 39; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/70-72; Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 15, 83. For a review of the martyr compilations of the V. Bahram Gor period, see ibid, 85-88.
[238] The Christian chronicles give no clue as to the share of theological disagreements in the debates that arose within the church during this period and earlier. Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 33.

was deleted from the list.[239] Dadisho (421-456) was elected as Catholicos by some bishops. However, many bishops opposed this and refused to accept Dadişo "s leadership. They were excommunicated by Dadişo and stripped of their clerical authority. They then complained to the Sassanid authorities with various accusations against Dadisho.[240] As a result, Dadisho was imprisoned and released after the peace between Rome and the Sassanids (422). But this time he was exiled to Markabta (Hira). Exhausted by all this, Dadişo" wanted to resign from his post, but in the petition presented to him with the signatures of thirty-six bishops, he was asked to remain in his post as the catholicos of the Eastern Church and was dissuaded from resigning.[241] In fact, the Council of Dadişo" was held after this event.

2.6.4. Dadişo" Council (424)

Unlike the other two councils, the Council of Dadişo was not held in the capital but in Markabta, where Dadişo had been exiled. Although Akak, the bishop of Amid, was present in Ktesiphon-Seleucia as the representative of Rome, he was not invited to the council and only the bishops of the Eastern Church attended.[242] According to the minutes of the council, the metropolitans and bishops gathered were asked by the Catholicos, the archbishop, and Mar Dadişo, the leader of all Christians in the east (Rasha d-Madneha), to resign from his position as Catholicos; They asked Mar Dadişo, the archbishop and leader of all the Christians in the east (Rasha d-Madneha), to return to the high priesthood (catholicosate), which he had been entrusted by Jesus Christ to do, just as Jesus Christ had entrusted Peter, the head of the apostles, to shepherd and guide the people of Jesus in all the eastern regions.[243] This is the first time in the official records of the Eastern Church that the archbishop of Ctesiphon-Seleucia and the

Cathedral of Kokhe were recognized as having apostolic origin, like the bishoprics of Rome, Antioch and Alexandria.

[239] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 36, Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārika*, 28; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 294.
[240] *Synodicon Orientale*, 287-288.
[241] *Synodicon Orientale*, 285-286.

[242] Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 84.
[243] *Synodicon Orientale*, 286; M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Dadiso AD 424* (Accessed 13. 03. 2019), 1.

These statements are quite remarkable in terms of indicating that the eastern Catholicos was equal to his western counterparts. Thus, an attempt was made to show that the eastern catholicos was equal to his western counterparts. Dadişo", on the other hand, after describing the painful events he had gone through, made an emotional speech about the difficulties of the Church's administration from a single hand and asked to be excused. Bishop Agapeta then asked for permission to read the letters sent by the western fathers to the early fathers of the Eastern Church and to Mar Isaac and Mar Yahballaha, read them, and then proceeded to address the audience as follows:

> "During the reign of Mar Pope, some malicious bishops rebelled against him, and Mar Miles and some venerable men like him, out of their naive sincerity, were unconsciously dragged behind these malicious bishops in a vain zeal, thus nullifying Mar Pope's authority. But then the situation was presented to the western fathers and they found the dissenting bishops wrong and excommunicated them.[244] Because by their [the Western Fathers'] decision, the novices were not allowed to rule or judge over their teachers. According to the laws God has established in human nature, children cannot deprive their fathers of their property. Jesus Christ built His church on Peter and "gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Although Christ gave the gift of the priesthood to all the other disciples, He gave this special authority over the church only to Peter and not to the other disciples. Just as there is only one God, so too the right of spiritual fatherhood, the patriarchate, belongs to only one man. Therefore, the head, leader and ruler of the brethren must be only one faithful ruler."[245]

After mentioning the privileges of the catholicos, Agapeta explained the rights and responsibilities of the bishops. According to this

> "Bishops who feel they are being oppressed by the administration should be allowed to tell what is being done to them in the presence of the catholicos at the councils. If other bishops have the impression that they are being oppressed, they should report it in a petition, which is the purpose of holding a council every year, to find solutions to such problems. Therefore, from now on, also in the east, the bishops will not be allowed to act against their leader in the cathedral patriarchate of Seleucia Kokhe. Because no one has the authority to judge him."[246]

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[244] In this speech on the abolition of the tutelage of the western fathers, Agapeta ironically uses the example of Mar Pope, who sought the support of the western fathers to establish his authority over other bishops and with their help tried to establish his authority over the bishops of the Eastern Church.
[245] M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Dadiso AD 424*, 3-4.
[246] M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Dadiso AD 424*, 5.

He then talked about the turmoil in the times of Mar Isaac and Mar Yahballaha and the services rendered by the western fathers, and pointed out that the western fathers helped them from time to time through their emissaries in the divisions and conflicts in the Eastern Church or in the persecutions they faced due to the Magi. He continued as follows:

> "Now, in the same way, persecution and suffering are becoming bitter towards us. The times do not allow them [the Sassanids] to tolerate us as before. We, dear sons and zealous heirs, must take care to support and help each other through our patriarchate. Otherwise, God forbid, we will fall on our heads and perish mercilessly. Let us now ask Dadisho to deign to accept our request that he continue in office. If he does not accept our request, we will wait at his door until he agrees to allow Dadisho to establish his patriarchate over us, as Peter became the head of the apostles according to the command of Jesus Christ."[247]

Bishop Husho of Nusaybin, who took the floor after Agapeta, called on the bishops to unite around Mar Dadisho in order to end the turmoil in the Eastern Church and restore peace and tranquility. Those who disobeyed his orders should be punished according to the laws of the Western Church, which were also accepted by the Eastern Church. According to him, bishops should no longer be allowed to convene synods against their own leader (the catholicos), dismiss him, or file complaints before the Western Fathers. Even if the catholicos is wrong, the bishops cannot dismiss him or file a complaint against him before the western fathers. For his judgment is reserved for Christ. The catholicos of the East cannot be judged by those under his rule or by his peer patriarchs. But the catholicos can judge all those under his rule with the authority given to him by Christ who elected him and elevated him to the position of leader of the Church. After these speeches, Mar Dadişo" agreed to return to his post and the council closed.[248]

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[247] M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Dadiso AD 424*, 6.
[248] *Synodicon Orientale*, 287-297; M. J. Birnie, *The Synod of Mar Dadiso AD 424*, 1-8.

The first two councils of the Eastern Church were held under the initiative of Yazdigird I in an atmosphere of complete peace. However, at the beginning of Bahram V's rule, the preparation for war with Rome and the violence against Christians reminded the Sassanids that there was a limit to the Sassanid tolerance towards their Christian subjects. During this period, the Eastern Church realized, albeit painfully, that they had to position themselves according to the situation of the state under whose rule they lived. Indeed, Agapeta's speeches point to this. The interference of the Western fathers in church affairs put them in a difficult position before the Sassanid government. Because this situation creates the implication that they were supporters of Rome. In this respect, the idea that the Roman Church should not interfere in the internal affairs of the Eastern Christians and that the problems should be solved on their own initiative began to be accepted. The most important result of this council was that, unlike the other two councils, it acted away from the tutelage of the western fathers and declared that the Eastern Church had an apostolic origin just like its western counterparts. However, what makes the situation interesting here is that in order to sever relations with the Western Church, the powers of the chair of the catholicos of the Eastern Church were determined and its authority was tried to be ensured by bringing evidence from the decisions taken by the western fathers.

2.7. The Transformation of the Eastern Church into the Nestorian Church

Although the Eastern Church, with the Council of Mar Dadisho, showed the will to free itself from the domination of the western fathers and to establish its authority in its internal functioning, it soon found itself involved in the christological debates of the western fathers. After the Council, we do not have sufficient historical data about the administration of Dadisho (d.457) and his attitude towards the debates in the west. It is known that he continued to live in Hira and died there.[249] Considering this situation, it does not seem possible to say that he established complete authority over the Eastern

Church. This last council

[249] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 36.

Although the Eastern Church aimed to liberate itself from the indoctrination of the western fathers and this was partially realized, the influence of the western fathers made itself felt in a different way. The Christological debates that emerged in the West and the decisions of the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451), through the schools of Urfa and Nusaybin, affected Syriac/Aramaic Christians the most and set them on a path of no return. Before entering into these debates, it is necessary to examine the mutual interactions of Christians in Sassanid and Roman lands during this period.

The peaceful atmosphere during the reign of Yazdigird I was very favorable for the development of Christianity. This situation continued except for the first year of the reign of Bahram Gor V (421-438). Therefore, both Syriac/Aramaic Christians and Armenian Christians under Sassanid rule were able to freely cross the border and receive religious instruction at the School of Urfa, founded by Mar Efrem, or at other educational centers in the area. In fact, the Urfa School was called the Persian School because of the large number of students from Sassanid lands.[250] Syriac became an effective element for Syriac/Aramaic Christians to reinforce their sense of religious belonging. This development found its reflection among Armenians as well, with the first Armenian alphabet being created and Armenian religious literature emerging by Armenians who crossed the border to receive religious education. This situation caused Christianity to be in the councils within the Sassanid borders and especially the Armenian clergy to exert influence over the Armenian nobles or the Christian[251] elements in the army, which negatively affected the integrity of the Sassanid army. Yezdigird II (438-457), observing the laxity in the struggle against the Eftalites (Akhuns) and in the protection of the Caucasus from Hun oppression, put an end to this situation.

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[250] Hayes, *The Academy of Urfa*, 166. Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 176; Brock, "The Sassanid Empire Until the VI Century", 84.

[251] Armenians differed from the Assyrian/Aramaic communities, who were reaya, in terms of having political administration and military elements within the Sassanid Empire.

to give the empire the power it deserved. In this regard, he was convinced by the Meccan clergy and nobility that if the religious division could be overcome, the empire could greatly advance, especially on the military front. Consequently, in order to unite the Sassanid Empire under Magianism, he imposed Magianism and banned Christianity, especially among the Armenians, according to a specific plan. However, each stage of this plan was met with great opposition from the clergy and the nobles they manipulated. Far from restoring order in the army, this plan led to a heavy defeat against the Eftalites. Yazdigird II severely punished the Meccan clerics who convinced the country that he would be invincible if he rallied everyone around Magianism, the bishops who encouraged the Armenian nobility to revolt, and some Assyrian/Aramaic bishops and commanders whose loyalty was in doubt. Christian chronicles and martyrologies, however, focus only on the violence against the bishops of Armenia and Mesopotamia, ignoring the persecution of the Magian clergy by the emperor.[252] Indeed, the martyrdom narratives of this period in Eastern Christian chronicles and martyrologies often include stories of high-ranking Christians, such as Magian nobles, who converted to Christianity.[253] After the brief persecution of Christians during the reign of Yazdigird II, the Eastern Christians lived in quite favorable conditions during the reign of Piroz (459-484). In fact, during this period, the debates among Christians in the Roman Empire were closely monitored and the diophysite Christianity that was expelled from there was able to spread among the Christians under Sassanid rule.[254] In short, despite the Eastern Church's desire to isolate itself from the western fathers, the political and policy environment on both sides of the border was quite favorable for the transitions between Christians.

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[252] Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 88-90, 100, 151-153.
[253] Abona, *Shuhada al-Mashrik*, 266-282; Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 37, 39-40; Honarchiansaky, *Study of a Peace*, 145-147.
[254] Klaus Schippmann, "Fīrūz," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (Accessed January 25, 2020).

and that religious developments in the West somehow had an impact on them.

2.7.1. Antioch and Alexandria Schools

Debates about the person of Jesus Christ began to occupy the Christian world from the first century. While the early Judeo-Christian communities accepted that Jesus Christ was a human being within the framework of a monotheistic understanding of God, Pauline Christianity recognized Jesus Christ as the "Son of God" and God. This understanding of Jesus Christ as the second element of the Trinity, consisting of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, has been accepted as the orthodox Christian view. Even after the neutralization of the Judeo-Christian communities that held that Jesus was a human being, beliefs that accepted Jesus as a human being continued to exist among the gentiles. However, in the face of pressure from state-sponsored Christianity, these understandings gradually raised the tone of the divine presence in Jesus, but still refrained from equating him with God. The monotheist theologians who emerged among the gentiles, such as Theodotus of Byzantium, Paul of Samsath (275), Artemon, Photeinos of Symium (376), and Euphrates, refrained from equating Jesus with God, albeit in different tones. However, it was mainly with Arius (256-336) that the controversy over Christology gained wide currency. In short, he portrayed Jesus as superior to man and inferior to God.[255] With the acceptance of the view of the absolute deity of Jesus as the orthodox belief at the Council of Nicaea, the Christological debates shifted to a different track and focused on the interrelation of the divine and human natures in Jesus. It was during this period that deep differences of opinion emerged between the schools of Antioch and Alexandria. It was no longer the deity of Jesus, but the interrelation of the divine and human natures in Jesus in one body.

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[255] These are the representatives of a theology called dynamic monarchism in different periods. The theology of Jesus of this school of thought is monotheistic, according to which Jesus is not the incarnation of God. He is a human being who received divine power from the one God. For more information on the understanding of Jesus Christ in this period, see Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 22-66; Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 206-239.

how they met. But in any case, it is possible to trace the origin of the ideas referring to the human aspect in Jesus to monotheistic Judeo-Christian communities and monotheistic gentile Christianity. It should be noted that the designations Antiochian (Diophysite) and Alexandrian (Monophysite) schools, which we will discuss here, were created in the modern period to describe the post-Arian Christological debates.[256]

Alexandria stood out as one of the leading deep-rooted cultural centers of the period and was known as the New Athens. It was an important center for both Greek culture and philosophy and Jewish culture and religious studies. Early Christian theologians such as Pantaenus (d. 200), Clement (d. 215) and Origen (d. 254) also took their place in the city's cultural basin. They defended Christianity against Greek philosophy, Jewish culture and especially gnosticism. Christian studies here were particularly influenced by the Platonic philosophical tradition and gnostic tendencies. The Gnostic understanding of salvation as the attainment of the knowledge of divine secrets influenced the Christian understanding of salvation and had an impact on the spiritual life of the Egyptian monks. Philosophy was used to understand and interpret Christian theology, and especially the Platonic philosophical tradition was taken as a basis by Christian theologians in Alexandria. At the Council of Nicaea (325), Alexandria became the most prestigious bishopric in the country, along with Rome and Antioch.

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[256] The terms diophysite, monophysite, and miaphysite are modern christological expressions used to describe the views of the parties in the christological debate. Diophysite is used to describe those who hold that there are two distinct natures in the person of Jesus Christ, one divine and one human, and is generally attributed to the followers of the Council of Chalcedon and specifically to the Nestorians. Monophysite is the view that in Jesus Christ the divine and human natures were completely mixed and that the human nature was swallowed up by the divine nature and that there was only one divine nature. Miaphysite, on the other hand, is the view that in Jesus Christ the divine and human natures were manifested as a single nature. In historical sources and Syriac studies until recently, the term monophysite was used for the majority of churches that did not accept the Christological formula of the Council of Chalcedon. Today, however, there is a widespread view that these churches were not monophysites, but miaphysites, and that the term monophysite should be used to describe the crystallological view of Eutyches. See Kutlu Akalın-Zafer Duygu, *Syriac Literature* (Mardin: Mardin Artuklu University Press, 2017), 16, 18-19, 38-39: Sebastian P. Brock, "Not Monophysite but Miaphysite!", *Introduction to Christology, Miaphysite, Dyophysite and Chalcedonian Understandings*, ed. and trans. Zafer Duygu, Kutlu Akalın (Istanbul: Divan Kitap, 2018), 67-72.

center of the theology of the Church. Clerics such as Arius (336), Athanasius (373),[257] Cyril (444) and Dioscoros (454), who were trained here, shaped theological and Christological debates. The christological view of the Alexandrian school was based on the understanding of salvation as grace "from God to man" with reference to the first passages of the Gospel of John. This resulted in the body being relegated to the background for the salvation of the soul in spiritual life and the emphasis shifting to the divine nature in Christological interpretation. The Alexandrian school, so to speak, set its eyes on heaven. This school was based on the allegorical and allegorical interpretation of the Bible. The Alexandrian school was especially influential on the Western Assyrians (Jacobites) and Armenians.[258]

As the administrative center of the eastern regions, Antioch was the third most important cultural center after Rome and Alexandria. Greek language and literature developed significantly here and it was called the Athens of Syria. The name Christian was first used here. Although Greek philosophy was active here, the Semitic understanding remained. There was a sharp distinction between man as a finite being and God as an immaterial being. In contrast to the Platonic tradition of the Alexandrian school, the Aristotelian tradition was active here. Diodore of Tarsus, John of the Golden Mouth, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, and Theodoret of Cyrus were prominent figures of this school. The christological view of the Antiochian school was based on the understanding of salvation following a progression from "man to God" in accordance with the synoptic Gospels. For the divine plan of salvation, it focuses on the life of Jesus Christ (the historical Jesus) and the stages of his development towards perfection. It is based on the imitation of the life of the Son of God in the virgin-born Christ (the historical Jesus) in relation to the divine plan of salvation.

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[257] According to Barhadbshabba, after the Council of Nicaea, St. Ewstasis founded a school in Antioch, Mar James in Nusaybin and St. Alexandra in Alexandria. Athanasius in Alexandria and Mar Efrem in Nusaybin were appointed as commentators to these schools. See Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 172.
[258] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian,* 15.

referring to the historical Jesus. Therefore, by emphasizing the human nature and moral choices of Jesus Christ, it is stated that the historical Jesus is the model for salvation. According to this school of thought, if the human nature of Jesus Christ is not taken into account for the salvation of man, then man is deprived of a role-model to emulate and this makes salvation difficult. In contrast to the Alexandrian school of biblical interpretation, this school emphasizes literal, literal and historical interpretation. It does not accept the typologic method of exegesis, which distances it from its original meaning.[259] After Arius' view of Christ and the extensive debates around the deity of Jesus Christ were concluded at the Council of Nicaea with the official acceptance of Jesus as having the same substance (homoousios) as God, the debates that arose in the context of the humanity of Jesus Christ formed the basis of the conflict between these two schools.

2.7.2. Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350-428)

Theodore of Mopsuestia, recognized by the Eastern Church as one of the three Greek teachers, along with Diodore of Tarsus and Nestorius, and the most important representative of the Antioch school, gained a reputation as the most important biblical interpreter and theologian of his time. Little is known about his early life except that he studied under the pagan orator and man of letters Libanius. He was a disciple of Diodore of Tarsus (IVth century), who became famous as a commentator during his time with John of the Golden Mouth. Diodore was an important representative of the tradition of Antiochian Christology and interpretation, but much of his work has not survived.[260] Theodore was bishop of Mopsuestia[261] , north of Antioch, from 392 until his death in 428. After the deposition of Nestorius in 431, he was considered the father of Nestorianism. Although he wrote his works in Greek

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[259] For extensive information on the theology of the Antioch School, see Demirci, *Nestorian Christianity and Antioch Theology*, 7-21.
[260] Sebastian P. Prock, "Diodore of Tarsus", *GEDSH*, 125.
[261] The ancient city of Misis near Adana. Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 132.

Very little of his work in this language has survived. Sixteen memras in Syriac, commentaries on the Old and New Testaments, and a debate between Macedonius and his followers are preserved in the Eastern Christian tradition. Quotations from his work abound in the works of Eastern Christians. The Eastern Church honored him as the greatest commentator and exegete (mpaššqānā) and attributed to him one of the eucharistic anaphora[262] .[263]

While Theodore was still alive, his interpretations of the Bible and his cryptological views began to be taught at the School of Urfa and soon began to be translated into Syriac. Therefore, the School of Urfa came under the influence of Theodore's interpretations and cryptological view with a diophysite character from the 420s onwards.[264] There are plausible reasons for the great acceptance of Theodore's commentaries and christological views in the School of Urfa and through it in the Eastern Church in the Sassanid region. [265]First, he was highly renowned in the Antiochian diocese, highly respected as the greatest living commentator and one of the most vigorous fighters against heretics. Secondly, there is an inherent integrity and systematicity in his commentaries. He interpreted all or nearly all of the books of the Old and New Testaments in a plain, simple, non-allegorical and historically direct approach, carefully examining the meaning of each sentence. In his interpretations, it is very important to be faithful to the original meaning of the words and to consider the historical context. He also used this method in allegorical passages that were thought to contain a hidden meaning. The fact that his way of thinking and interpretation was quite systematic and that he tried to clarify many obscure points in the scriptures with the help of clearly defined principles

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[262] Anaphora means "Presentation of the Sacrifice" in the sacred liturgy and is the most important part of this liturgy. It is a term used for the type of writing that systematizes the order of the prayers recited in this part and contains the texts of the prayers. Akalin - Duygu, *Syriac Literature*, 5.
[263] Lucas Van Rompay, "Theodore of Mopsuestia", *GEDSH*, 401-402.
[264] Baum - Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 22.
[265] Especially against Arianism and Apollinarism.

It provided the opportunity to refute the ideas of many currents and gave his interpretations and thoughts a pedagogical appeal.[266] This situation was effective in meeting this need of the Urfa School, which had difficulties in terms of educational material, with Theodore's works. Before the use of Theodore's works in education, traditional interpretations, allegedly inherited from Mar Efrem and Adday, were used. According to Barhadbshabba, before Theodore, the biblical studies, commentaries and all the works of the orthodox church fathers were full of confusion, disorganization and disconnection. When Theodore came, he brought all this scattered material together, skillfully united it and put it at the service of the people as a systematic whole.[267] It is possible to attribute the systematic unity of his work and the classification of the biblical chapters according to their importance through a historical analysis to the influence of Aristotelian logic, which was active in the Antioch school. As a matter of fact, translations of Aristotle's works into Syriac began at the same time as Theodore's works.[268] In the Eastern Church tradition, the names "fušoqo/commentary" are used for Theodore of Mopsuestia's biblical commentaries and "mašelmonuto/tradition" for Mar Efrem's commentaries.[269]

After its foundation by Mar Efrem, the School of Urfa began to develop as the most important institution for clergymen crossing the Roman frontier from Sassanid lands to receive education, especially by taking advantage of the border crossing between the two empires. The prosecutions under Yazdigird I, Bahram V, and Yazdigird II seem to have further triggered this situation. Many of the seminarians trained here returned to their own lands.

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[266] Dana Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection to the Church of Persia to the end of the Seventh Century", *The Ascetial Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian, Translated by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery* (Boston: The Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1984), 489.
[267] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 174, 177.
[268] Hayes, *Urfa Academy*, 180, footnote 13.
[269] Sher, *Nusaybin Academy*, 101.

When they returned, they would hold important positions within the Eastern Church. In the 430s, the School of Urfa was completely under the influence of the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia. The students who studied here were not only influenced by diophysite Christology, but also had the opportunity to closely follow the theological developments in Rome.[270] Thus, the Eastern Church somehow maintained contact with the West and the process of its coming under the influence of mainstream Christianity in the Roman Empire continued at a rapid pace. In the time of Mar Efrem - who knew little or no Greek -[271] he used his own traditional interpretations, some books of the Old Testament, the Gospel of Diatessaron, or the traditional teachings that had come down to him from Addai and Mar Mari.[272] The Syriac theological language of Afrahat and Mar Efrem was quite different from that of their Greek-speaking contemporaries (although Efrem was influenced by the Greek theological agenda). It was only with the christological debates of the Vth century that both the Greek theological agenda and the Greek theological mode of expression began to take hold among Syriac writers from the School of Urfa.[273] According to Barhadbshabba, especially during the reign of Kyore (Qyore) (d. 437), an enlightened ascetic with a love of knowledge who succeeded Mar Efrem as the head of the school, a great breakthrough was made with the translation of many works from Greek into Syriac, especially the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and a sufficient number of materials were available for education. During this period, there was a noticeable increase in the number of students coming from the Sassanid region. Many students flocked here not only from that region but also from the Assyrian regions under Roman rule. In addition to figures such as Narsay, Barsauma and Ma "na, who was to become the bishop of Rev Ardeshir, who were to transmit Theodore's views to the east, there were also many other figures who would later become the founders of monophysite and diophysite views.

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[270] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century", 83-84.
[271] Hayes, *Urfa Academy*, 144.
[272] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 177. According to the rabbinic exegesis of Mar Efrem, he treats the

word literally and historically and applies the pastoral method. Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 17.
[273] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 87.

Many people who would become prominent as representatives of the Antiochian school were also trained here.[274] Thus, before the Council of Ephesus, the christological and diophysite ideas of the Antioch school began to gain acceptance among Christians within the borders of the Sassanid Empire.

2.7.3. Nestorius (381-453)

Nestorius was born in 381 to a family from Maras.[275] There is no information that Nestorius could speak or write Syriac. In fact, "Abdisho" bar Brikha reports that Nestorius did not know their language (Syriac).[276] Therefore, it is possible to say that he was not of Syriac origin. He completed his religious education in the monasteries of Antioch. He was renowned in Antioch for his ascetic life, intellectual ability and outstanding oratory skills. Although Eastern Church sources state that he personally studied under Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia,[277] there is no definite information that he took lessons directly from them.[278] However, since he grew up in the Antiochian school, he was influenced by their views. Theodisus II wanted to appoint a patriarch from outside to avoid any confusion after Sisinnios, the patriarch of Constantinople, who died on December 24, 427, and sought a suitable name for this. He sent two of his men to Antioch to examine Nestorius and decided that he was suitable for the patriarchate with his superior abilities and prudence.[279] According to Barhadbshabba of Arbilli, Nestorius

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[274] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 175-178.
[275] Syriac sources give Kahramanmaras as his birthplace. In fact, this information stems from a misunderstanding of the statements of the Church historian Socrates, a contemporary of Nestorius. For he states that Nestorius' family came from Marash. Nestorius may never have lived in Marash. George A. Bevan, "Nestorius", *GEDSH*, 306. There is no truth to the rumor that he was born in Marash as the grandson of a Persian named Addai in the village of Atak near Daraa, as reported by the monophysites Philoxenus and Dionysius bar Salibi. For the letter in question, see Alphonse Mingana, "The Early Spread of Christianity in Central Asia and the Far East: A New Document", reprinted from *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 9/2 (1925), 353-355.
[276] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 16.
[277] Rafal Kosinski, "The Life of Nestorius as seen in Greek and Oriental sources", *Continuity and Change, Studies in Late Antique Historiography*, ed. Dariusz Brodka and Michal Stachura, *Electrum* 13 (Kraków: 2007), 157; Both Nestorian and opposing sources agree that Nestorius was a disciple of Theodore. However, it is more accurate to understand this as a defense of his teachings. See same article, 164.
[278] Bevan, "Nestorius", *GEDSH*, 306.
[279] Socrates, *History of the Church, in Seven Books*, VII, 29.

On his way to Constantinople, he visited his master Theodore of Mopsuestia and received his last advice from him.[280] On April 10, 428, he began his mission and in his sermon, in the presence of the emperor, he said: "Emperor! Give me a world free of heretics. I will give you heaven in return. Help me in my fight against heretics. I will help your victory over the Persians."[281] He signaled that he would wage a fierce struggle against heretics. He quickly started an intensive activity against the groups he considered heretical, especially the Arians, secular entertainments, performances, theater, wrestling sports and dancers. Apart from these, he gained many enemies by intervening in the dioceses, putting an end to the disorder of monastic monks, and some of his attitudes towards women.[282] According to Socrates, he destroyed a religious place belonging to the Arians, whereupon they started a great fire and the city was in great turmoil. In addition, his interference in the episcopal districts caused the reaction of normal Christians who were not heretics. This led to many disturbances in the city.[283] John of the Golden Mouth and Nestorius' understanding of patriarchal governance is very similar. Both fought uncompromisingly against heretics and the secular and extravagant life in the capital. Nestorius also earned the hatred and enmity of the emperor's sister Pulkheria and Dalmatios, the abbot of the monastery in the capital.[284] On September 26, 428, he celebrated the first liturgical mass for his counterpart from Antioch, John of the Golden Mouth.[285]

Anastasius, a priest whom Nestorius brought with him from Antioch, probably in the summer of 428, preached one day that Mary was the Theotokos.

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[280] Kosinski, "The Life of Nestorius", 157.
[281] Socrates, *History of the Church, in Seven Books*, VII, 29.
[282] Kosinski, "The Life of Nestorius", 157, 166.
[283] Socrates, *History of the Church, in Seven Books*, VII, 29, 31. Following the example of Nestorius' harsh treatment of heretics, Anthony, bishop of Germa, under the pretext of fulfilling the patriarch's purpose, carried out various persecutions, especially against the Macedonians. See ibid. VII, 31.
[284] Kosinski, "The Life of Nestorius", 159, 165-166.
[285] Bevan, "Nestorius", *GEDSH*, 306-307.

God should not be called the "begetter" and that it was not possible for God to be born of a woman. Although these words had a great impact in Constantinople and caused an uproar, Nestorius made speeches in support of him.[286] A fierce debate broke out between those who argued that Mary was the Theotokos and those who argued that she was Anthropotokos (a human mother). Although Nestorius soon found himself in a major controversy, he continued to defend the correctness of his friends' views on the use of the title "Theotokos". As the controversy intensified, he clarified his words a little more and suggested the use of "Christotokos" in the sense of "Christ-bearer" instead of "Theotokos", but he could not prevent the controversy. According to him, Mary had given birth not to Christ, who was God, but to Christ, who was a human being. These debates in Constantinople gave Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, a very good opportunity for the struggle between the churches of Constantinople and Alexandria. Some priests from Egypt had already complained to the emperor about their patriarch Cyril and the emperor had referred the situation to Nestorius.[287] It was not possible for Cyril to accept the primacy of the Constantinople patriarchate and its interference in his internal affairs. In a masterful maneuver, he turned the issue into a cryptological polarization, which was an advantageous field for him.[288] First of all, he sent various letters to Nestorius, trying to persuade him to give up his claims. Then, not content with these, he started a relentless struggle against Nestorius by sending letters to Emperor Theodeus, his sister Pulkheria, his wife Eudocia, Pope Celestine I (422-432), the opponents of Nestorius in the capital and various people. However, Nestorius refused to renounce his faith and continued to preach his thoughts. As a result of Cyril's efforts, Pope Celestine I declared in August 430 that the title of Theotokos could be used in Rome and that Nestorius was a heretic.

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[286] Socrates, *History of the Church, in Seven Books*, VII, 32.
[287] Kosinski, "The Life of Nestorius", 158-159.
[288] Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 134-135; Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 324.

a synod was organized to declare it so. Cyril also convened a synod in Egypt shortly afterward and took decisions in this regard. He then sent a twelve-point letter to Nestorius in an arrogant and patronizing manner excommunicating Nestorius' views and the approaches of the Antiochian school in general. Nestorius responded with a twelve-point counter-excommunication. The thoughts expressed in this correspondence are very important as they reflect the general framework of the theological and Christological views of the parties (diophysite-monophysite).[289] The emperor then called for a council in Ephesus in 431 to put an end to the growing controversy.[290]

2.7.4. First Council of Ephesus (431)

The Christian world held its first ecumenical council in Nicaea (325) because of Arius' view on the Son, and the deity of Jesus Christ was accepted. Later, after the controversy over Macedonius' view on the Holy Spirit, the Council of Constantinople was held (381) and the Holy Spirit was officially recognized as the third person of the Trinity. Now they had gathered in Ephesus to settle the controversy over the person of Jesus. On one side of the debate were Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, and his supporters, John, patriarch of Antioch, and his bishops; on the other side were the bishops of Alexandria, of which Cyril was patriarch, and Rome, of which Celestine I was patriarch. The city of Ephesus held many advantages for Cyril. First, the Church of Ephesus was uncomfortable with the efforts of the patriarchate of Constantinople to spread its influence, and so Memnon, the bishop of the city, sided with Cyril. Furthermore, Ephesus was one of the ancient centers of the cult of the mother goddess and also the home of the Theotokos Mary because of its current tradition of being the home of the Virgin Mary.

[289] For a chronology of this period, see Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, trans. G. R. Driver, Leonard Hodgson (Oxford: Clarendon Prees, 1925), xvii-xviii; on the content of the correspondence between Cyril and Nestorius, see J. F. Bethune- Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine, to the Time of the Council of Chalcedon* (London: Methuen, 1903), 260-269; Friedrich Loofs, *Nestorius and His Place in the History of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge Universty Press, 1914), 26-45.

[290] Socrates, *History of the Church, in Seven Books*, VII, 34.

to the use of the word "Nestorius". Nestorius was therefore persona non grata here. Although Nestorius and Cyril had arrived in Ephesus with their entourages on June 7, the start date of the council, the delegates from Rome and Antioch had not yet arrived. Although the Antiochian delegation sent a letter on June 20 saying that they would arrive in five or six days and asked them to wait until they arrived, Cyril started the council without waiting for the Roman and Antiochian delegates to reach the city. Nestorius did not attend the council despite being invited. The council, which started under the presidency of Cyril, excommunicated Nestorius with the decision of 67 bishops. He then proclaimed his christological views, which were expressed in the letters he had sent to Nestorius. Accordingly, Mary was the Theotokos and Christ had a single divine nature after the union, contrary to Nestorius' assertion. After the closing of the council, the bishops took torches and marched through the streets of the city chanting "Mary, Mother of God". When the Antioch delegation arrived in the city on June 26 and learned that Nestorius had been excommunicated, Patriarch John immediately called a council and declared Cyril deposed. Nestorius did not attend either council. Both sides reported the decisions of the council to the emperor. The emperor replied that the decisions taken at the council were canceled. The Roman delegation, which arrived in the city shortly afterward, immediately declared its support for Cyril and organized a new council and excommunicated thirty-four Eastern bishops, including John, the patriarch of Antioch, and Theodoret of Cyrus, the most important representative of the Antioch School of the time. The Roman delegation also reported their decisions to the emperor in a report. Thereupon, the emperor announced the dismissal of Nestorius, Cyril and Memnon, the bishop of Ephesus, and had the three of them arrested. They were imprisoned until September. Nestorius does not seem to have understood how things had gotten to this point. Because in the meantime, he would state that the title of Theotokos could be used for Mary if the controversy would end. Tired of these controversies, he decided to retire to his monastery in Antioch.

He asked the emperor to grant him permission. In the meantime, Cyril did many activities to get support from the palace. In the end, the emperor decided that Nestorius should retire to the monastery in Antioch and the other two should return to their duties. Maximilan, known for his closeness to Cyril, was appointed patriarch of Constantinople. In fact, no theological issues were decided at this council, except that the parties excommunicated each other.[291] Politically, however, the Church of Alexandria and its representative Cyril won, both establishing superiority over the patriarchate of Constantinople and invalidating the views of the Church of Antioch. The Church of Antioch was then divided into the followers of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius (diophysites) and the followers of Cyril (monophysites) and began to clash within itself.

Going back to Nestorius, he remained in the monastery in Antioch from 431 to 434/5 and was exiled to Petra (Jordan) in 435. He was then sent to Oasis in Egypt. In 449, at the Second Council of Ephesus, when Theodisus II died and Marcion succeeded him as ruler (450), and at the Council of Chalcedon (451), he was still in exile. Accordingly, he remained in exile for 18 years and died in Panopolis in 452 or 453, shortly after the Council of Chalcedon.[292] Although he had high hopes for the Council of Chalcedon, it confirmed his excommunication. His most important supporter, Theodoret of Cyrus, had to acquiesce.[293] Although Nestorius' form of government was open to criticism, the main concern of his christological views was to prevent the misuse of the term Theotokos. However, with Cyril's involvement in the controversy, the incident took on very different dimensions. In Christ, as his opponents claimed, there were "two natures, two persons and one

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[291] Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to*, 270-275; Socrates, *History of the Church, in Seven Books*, VIII, 32, 34, 35; Loofs, *Nestorius*, 45-52; Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 31-32; Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 142-145; Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 331-335.
[292] Kosinski, "The Life of Nestorius", 166-167; Bevan, "Nestorius", *GEDSH*, 307.
[293] Loofs, *Nestorius*, 59.

existence" in the shape of crystallological formula that you have adopted to be told does not seem possible.[294]

2.7.5. Attempted Reconciliation (433)

After the Council of Ephesus, the churches of Alexandria and Antioch continued on their own views until 433. However, an agreement was reached in 433 between Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, and John, the patriarch of Antioch, in order to eliminate the division in accordance with the emperor's order. Accordingly, the Church of Antioch accepted the use of the Theotokos (that Mary was the Mother of God) and the excommunication of Nestorius. In terms of the Christological formula, the Alexandrian School's formula that there was one nature in Jesus Christ after the union was rejected and instead the Antiochian School's view of the unity of the two natures in Jesus Christ was accepted.[295] However, this compromise text created new divisions within the Church of Antioch. Some of them adopted Cyril's views and favored Alexandrian Christology. In addition, those who adopted the Antiochian Christology were also divided among themselves. The majority, led by John, patriarch of the Church of Antioch, agreed to give up their support for Nestorius and reconciled with Cyril. A group led by Theodoret of Cyrus, although ready to compromise with Cyril, refrained from condemning Nestorius. Another group, passionately committed to Antiochian Christology, defended Nestorius in any case and firmly rejected Cyril and his teaching. This last group opposed John's covenant with Cyril and left Antioch for Urfa.[296] The patriarch of Antioch asked the Roman government for help against them. The emperor removed Nestorius from the monastery in Antioch and exiled him first to Petra and then to Oasis in Egypt.

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[294] Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 36.
[295] Bethune- Baker, *An Introduction to*, 272- 273. Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 100; *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/83-84.
[296] Hayes, *Urfa Academy,* 222.

He then ordered his works to be burned.[297] With the deposition of many bishops, the group loyal to Theodore of Mopsuestia enthusiastically began translating the works of Diodore and Theodore into Syriac, Armenian and Persian.[298] Although Cyril accepted the compromise text of 433, which included the formula of Antiochian Christology, he insisted on his excommunication of Nestorius and resorted to all means, even bribery, to secure it. There are documents on this subject, including a letter sent through Epiphanius to the patriarch of Constantinople, Maximilan, and a list of gifts sent to Constantinople. John and the Antiochians paid a heavy price for their agreement with Cyril in exchange for the continued excommunication of Nestorius. Theodoret of Cyrus, on the other hand, persistently defended his friend Nestorius.[299]

2.7.6. II. Councils of Ephesus (449) and Chalcedon (451)

Despite the 433 attempts at reconciliation, the cristological disputes within the empire did not end. A large group of clergy, led by Theodoret of Cyrus and Hiba, bishop of Urfa, who advocated Theodorian Christology and favored Nestorius, continued to increase their influence in the eastern regions and engaged in a struggle with the clergy who supported Alexandrian Christology. During this period, a monk named Eutyches (c. 378-c. 454), abbot of a monastery near Constantinople, argued that after the incarnation human nature was transformed by divine nature and that only divine nature was present in Jesus. In response, Flavianos (446-449), bishop of Constantinople, condemned Eutyches, one of the most loyal representatives in Constantinople of Dioscorus (444-451), the new patriarch of Alexandria in 448, and excommunicated his Christology. In order to settle all these debates, the II Council of Ephesus was organized by order of the emperor (449), which included Flavianos, the patriarch of Constantinople and Domnos, the patriarch of Antioch, as well as Theodoret of Cyrus and Hiba of Urfa.

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[297] Loofs, *Nestorius*, 58; Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 33.
[298] Bethune- Baker, *An Introduction to*, 276.
[299] Loofs, *Nestorius*, 54-56.

Important Theodorian clergy were excommunicated and deposed, and Eutyches was reinstated. Although the Church of Alexandria had achieved a new victory and the situation was quite favorable for her, she made an important mistake and confronted the Church of Rome by not allowing the letter of the Roman Patriarch Leo (440-461), Tomos, explaining her Christological position, to be read during the council. Leo then called this council the "Council of Bandits" and rejected the decisions taken.[300] Marcion (450-457) and his wife Pulkheria, who became emperor after the death of Theodisus II, were against the strengthening of the Church of Alexandria and wanted to make the Church of Constantinople the most influential church in the empire. Therefore, the request of the Roman patriarch Leo to convene a new council was deemed appropriate. Thus, a new council was organized in Chalcedon in 451. In this council, the Christological view in Leo's Tomos was accepted. According to this, Christ is a single person who retains his divine and human nature. He is fully God and fully man. There can be no mixing, change, division or separation between these two natures. The title of Theotokos for Mary was again accepted. Eutyches and his christological view were condemned, and Dioscoros, the patriarch of Alexandria, was excommunicated. Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople, who had been excommunicated at the Second Council of Ephesus, was reinstated and Theodoret of Cyrus and Hiba of Urfa were allowed to return to their episcopal positions. Nestorius, however, could not escape excommunication again, even though he stated in his work that Leo and Flavian's Christological view of the Council of Chalcedon was his own.[301] Although the churches of Rome and Constantinople left this council satisfied, albeit for different reasons, in reality the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon irrevocably divided the Christian churches. The Monophysite churches of Egypt and Syria opposed these decisions and soon uprisings broke out in Egypt, Syria and Palestine. These

[300] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/86-89; Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 147.
[301] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 366-370.

The council created a major schism for Syriac/Aramaic Christians. Although the restoration of the episcopal see to Theodoret of Cyrus and Hiba of Urfa may seem like a victory for Theodorian Christology, in fact they lost much of their base in Roman territory in favor of the Church of Alexandria (Monophysites). Hiba's diophysite followers in Urfa were greatly weakened and began to be attacked by the Monophysites. Indeed, by the time of his death in 457, most of his followers had fled to Sassanid territory and there were almost no defenders of Nestorius and his diophysite Christology left in Roman territory. From then on, the cristological debate shifted rapidly eastward, between the Syriacs/Aramaics of the Eastern Church, who would adopt the diophysite view under Sassanid rule, and the Syriacs/Aramaics of the eastern borders of the Roman Empire, who would adopt the monophysite view. At the same time, conflicts continued in Roman territory between the Monophysites and the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon. The Roman Empire undertook various attempts to restore church unity. Emperor Zenon (474-491) revised the state policy in favor of the Council of Chalcedon and issued the Henotikon (Edict of Unity) in 482 to win back the Monophysites in Egypt, Syria and Palestine, who were in great resentment over the Council of Chalcedon. Accordingly, Nestorius was excommunicated again and Cyril's twelve excommunications were accepted. In a way, the followers of Theodorian Christology were sacrificed to reconcile the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon with the Monophysites. After this period, diophysite views could not survive on Roman soil. In 489, with the closure of the School of Urfa, the last remaining diophysite Christians were forced to flee to Sassanid territory. Finally, at the C o u n c i l o f Constantinople (553), the fifth ecumenical church council, Theodore of Mopsuestia, known as the "T h r e e Chapters",

The excommunication of Theodoret of Cyrus and Hiba, along with their works and letters, ended the Roman adventure of Theodorian Christology.[302]

2.8. Formal Acceptance of the Diophysite View

In the chronicles of the Eastern Church there is limited information about the church administration after the Council of Dadisho (424-484).[303] According to the chronicles, after the death of Dadisho (456), Baboy (Babowai) (457-484), who converted to Christianity from Magianism, became the Catholicos. Before becoming Catholicos, he was engaged in philosophy and lived a monastic life for a while. In 464, he was imprisoned by Piroz and released in 466 after peace was established between the Romans and the Sassanids. The chronicles portray his reign in a very negative light. During his rule there was a lot of corruption in the workings of the church and moral corruption among the clergy. The Catholicos is reported to have amassed much wealth and corrupted the appointment of bishops; he took the altar from the church to his home and baptized the faithful outside the church. Another accusation concerns the increase in illegitimate relationships between priests and bishops. In fact, it is reported that Barsauma, the bishop of Nusaybin, at the Council of Beth Lapat in 484, legitimized marriage for priests and bishops who could not control themselves in sexual matters because he wanted to put an end to these illegitimate relationships.[304] It is possible that this is related to the developments towards the end of Mar Baboy's rule. In this process, the religious developments in the Roman Empire in the context of the First and Second Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, and the School of Urfa and its successors

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[302] Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 41-43; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 25-26; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/90-94; Hayes, *Urfa Academy,* 231-235; Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 331-343, 370-377.

[303] Both the Siirt Chronicle and the collection of the Eastern Councils do not include events from 424 to 484. See also Albert Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/ 95.

[304] *Synodicon Orientale,* 526, 531-532; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 41-42; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 137-139. Barsauma refers to 1 Corinthians 7/9 on this subject.

It is difficult to trace the repercussions of the events at the Nusaybin School on the Eastern Church in the Nestorian chronicles.

Our main sources for the development of diophysite views among Christians under Sassanid rule and the process by which they became official doctrine are Hiba's letter to Mari of Persia, the work of Barhadbshabba, a diophysite, on the founding of the Nusaybin School, and the letter of Shem'un of Beth Arsham, an ardent monophysite, describing this process. Hiba, the head of the School of Urfa, is known, along with Theodoret of Cyrus, as the most important proponent of Theodorian Christology in his time. He was one of the most important forces behind the Syriac translations of the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia. He was an ardent defender of Nestorius at the First Council of Ephesus. Soon after, however, Rabbula, the bishop of Urfa, became a supporter of Alexandrian Christology, which led to various tensions between the diophysite group led by Hiba and the monophysite group led by Rabbula. Rabbula banned and burned the works of Mopsuestia. It was during this period (433) that Hiba wrote his famous letter to Mari of Persia. In 436, after Rabbula's death, Hiba became the bishop of Urfa. During his episcopate there were campaigns against Theodorusian Christology in Constantinople, Syria and Armenia, but Urfa remained relatively silent. In 448 he became one of the main targets of the Monophysites and was deposed at the Second Council of Ephesus (449). However, at the Council of Chalcedon (451), his famous letter was read and he was reinstated as bishop of Urfa. He remained in this position until his death in 457. Except for the Greek translation of his Syriac letter to Mari of Persia, none of his works have survived.[305] In his letter, Hiba gives information about the dispute between Cyril and Nestorius, the Council of Ephesus, the turmoil in the Eastern churches of Rome, the struggle between himself and Rabbula in Urfa, and in particular Rabbula's opposition to the works of Mopsuestian.

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[305] Lucas Van Rompay, "Hiba", *GEDSH*, 195-196.

He complains bitterly about his policy. Referring to the 433 reconciliation text, he expresses his satisfaction that the Antiochians have reached an agreement with the followers of Cyril and asks that these developments be reported to the fathers throughout the Persian field.[306] There are many different opinions about the identity of the addressee of this letter, Mari of Ardeshir in Persia.[307] However, in any case, it seems that in 433, communication channels were open between Hiba, one of the most important representatives of Theodorian Christology, and the priests of the Eastern Church under Sassanid rule, who adopted the same Christology, and were informed about the developments in Rome. In this case, it is understood that many students from the Sassanid region who came to the School of Urfa for education in the 430s acquired diophysite ideas, accepted Mopsuestian as the greatest master, and when they returned to their own countries, they became important positions within the Eastern Church. Shem "un of Beth-Arsham of Persia, who is known to have died before 548, was bishop of Beth Arsam near Ktesiphon-Seleucia. He is known as an ardent defender of Monophysite Christology and one of the most active opponents of Diophysite Christology. Because of these characteristics, the title "dorušo parsoyo" (Persian controversialist) is used for him. Estimated to have been written during the reign of the Roman Emperor Anastasius (491-518)

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[306] Hayes, *Urfa Academy,* 223-224.

[307] It is thought that the Persian Mari mentioned could be Dadisho. Because "Abdisho" bar Brikha attributes the book on the exegesis of the "Book of Danyal" to both of them. Accordingly, Mari was not used as a name but as Mar as an expression of respect. When this text was translated into Greek, the title "Mar" was mistakenly understood as a name. It is also not clear whether the Ardashir mentioned in the text refers to Rav-Ardashir (in Persia) or Veh-Ardashir (in Seleucia). It seems more plausible that Mari of Persia is not Dadişo". This is because Dadisho" not only did not study at the School of Urfa, but also lived and died in Hira. At the Council of Dadisho" he appears as Yazdad, bishop of Rav-Ardashir. There is also a suggestion that this Mari was an abbot of the Akoimetai community in Constantinople. See Hayes, *Academy of Urfa*, 223; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/96-97; Sher, *Academy of Nusaybin*, 178, footnote 146; Brock, "The Sassanid Empire Until the VI Century", 84, footnote 48;
M. Van Esbroeck, "Who is Mari, the Adressee of Ibas" Letter?", *Journal of Theological Studies* 38 (1987), 129-135. It is also possible that the Mari mentioned is Macna/Maana, who became Catholicos for a short time after Yahballaha. Because the Siirt Chronicle states that he studied at the School of Urfa and translated many books into Persian and Syriac. It states that he was dismissed as Catholicos by Yazdigird I, exiled to his hometown in Persia (Bet-Ardeshir) and his name was removed from the list of Catholicos. Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 292-294. In addition to this information, Mari b. Suleiman states that he was a knowledgeable cleric who translated from Syriac into Persian and that he argued with Yahballaha about church laws and that they had a falling out. Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 33.

His letter "Barsauma, Bishop of Nusaybin and the Nestorian Heresy" is important both for the use of the name Nesturi in a negative sense for the Eastern Church and for the description of the spread of diophysite Christology in the Sassanid region.[308] As one of the most active opponents of diophysite Christology, he uses very insulting language against the clergy in the Eastern Church who embraced this Christology. In his letter, Shem "un of Beth Arsham traces the origin of this heretical teaching, which he calls Nestorianism, to the Jews who accused Jesus Christ of blasphemy by saying that he was God. This heretical teaching reached Simon Magus, Ebion, Artemon, Paul of Samsath, Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, Theodoret of Cyrus and Hiba in a line. According to Shem "un, this teaching was handed down by Hiba to someone named Mari of Beth Hardashir (Ardeshir). From that moment on, the land of the Persians began to be corrupted by Nestorianism through the letters of Hiba and the commentaries, sermons and discourses of his masters. Later, Akak, Barsauma, Ma'ne of Beth Ardesh, Narsai, and many other students who came from Persia and studied at the Persian School in Urfa adopted these views and spread them throughout the Sassanid lands. Shem "un focuses on the trio of Achak, Barsauma and Narsai, whom he accuses of being very active in spreading this heresy (Nestorianism). It is clear from the letter that not all Sassanid students who studied at the School of Urfa adopted Nestorian views. A significant number of Persian students also held the monophysite view.[309] Barhadbshabba also states that the School of Urfa received students from all over the world, especially from the Sassanid region, and that Narsay, Barsauma and Mano had studied there before 437. Of these, Mar Narsay taught at the Urfa School for a long time after Hiba. Barsauma and Mano returned to their homeland long before Hiba's death in 457. Barsauma in Nusaybin and Mano,

[308] Lucas Van Rompay, "Shemun of Beth Arsham", *GEDSH*, 376.
[309] See Simeon of Beth Arsham, "Letter on Bar Ṣawmā and the heresy of the Nestorians", 1-4.

They became bishops in Beth-Ardeshir. When Mar Narsay was expelled from Urfa,[310] he came to Nusaybin to go to Persia. Barsauma, the bishop of Nusaybin, asked him to settle in Nusaybin and open a school there, saying that there was no better place to open a school than Nusaybin, which was on the border of two countries. Narsay accepted his offer and thus the Nusaybin School was founded. This school overshadowed the Urfa School and attracted the attention of not only Persians and Assyrians but also many students in Urfa and started to attract more attention.[311] From all this, it seems that even before the diophysite-monophysite controversy began in Roman lands, the crystallology of the Urfa School took on a diophysite character in the 420s and came under the influence of the views of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Persian clergymen who graduated from this school and later became important when they returned to their homeland began to spread these views. After the beginning of the diophysite-monophysite conflict in the Roman Empire, the Diophysites were forced to leave the Roman lands gradually during the period of Rabbula, the period of Nonus, the bishop of Urfa during Hiba's exile (448-449), the period from Hiba's death in 457 to the proclamation of the Henoticon in 482, and finally until the definitive closure of the School of Urfa in 489.[312] Barsauma, the bishop of Nusaybin, and Mar Narsay, the director of the Nusaybin School, played a major role in the official adoption of diophysite views by the Eastern Church. The former for his administrative and political activities and the latter for his theological and religious educational activities.

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[310] According to the Siirt Chronicle, the opponents wanted to burn him. Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 149.
[311] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 176-180.
[312] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/100; Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 84.

2.8.1. Barsauma, Bishop of Nusaybin (d. 491-496)

Due to his passionate adherence to diophysite views and his fierce opposition to monophysite views, Barsauma came to prominence while still in Urfa and was excommunicated at the Second Council of Ephesus. He was distinguished among the clergy of the Eastern Church of the time for his political skill and insight rather than his theological knowledge. The Syriac monophysite sources, on the other hand, regard him as the most important heretic who spread the heresy called Nestorianism in the East and they harbor great hostility towards him. Therefore, he is exaggeratedly portrayed with extremely negative characteristics. Barsauma was born in Beth-Kardo[313] and educated at the School of Urfa. He probably left the School of Urfa in 449 and was soon appointed bishop of Nusaybin by Catholicos Baboy. He established close relations with the Sassanid ruler Piroz (459-484). While serving as the bishop of Nusaybin, he worked with the Sassanid governor of the region and informed the Sassanids about the political and military situation of the Roman Empire. It seems that his activities against the Romans brought him a prestigious position in the eyes of the state.[314] After seeing the Roman Empire's efforts to reconcile with the monophysite view with the Henotikon (Edict of Unity, 482) and the prosecution of the diophysite views, Barsauma must have thought that the diophysite views could survive in the east only with state support and acceptance as the official view of the church.[315] He started activities to realize this idea and within a short period of time, he took action against Catholicos Baboy. He organized the Synod of Beth Lapat (484) with a large group of bishops, most of whom were educated at the School of Urfa and were leaders in the Eastern Church. At this council, presided by Barsauma, Catholicos Baboy was deposed, and the Roman

[313] A settlement east of Cizre, near the Tigris River.
[314] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 112-117; Adam H. Becker, "Barshawma of Nisibis", *GEDSH*, 58.
[315] Braun thinks that Barshawmo was unlikely to convince Piroz to support Nestorianism because of his position in the eyes of the state, and that the dispute between Baboy and Barshawmo was not based on theological grounds. Oscar Braun, *Das Bush der Synhados oder Synodicon Orientale* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1900), 60.

The monophysite view was rejected and the interpretations of Theodore of Mopsuestia were accepted as the true doctrine.[316] In addition, for those clerics who could not protect their souls against sexual desires, marriage was allowed, and customs such as marrying one's mother and sister, which were common among the Magi and which some of the Christianized Magi were still practicing, were prohibited. In response, Catholicos Baboy organized a synod and excommunicated the bishops who participated in the council.[317] The Synod of Beth Lapat can be read as a message that they had a different understanding of Christianity from the western understanding of Christianity and that they acted together with the Sassanid administration against Rome. Likewise, the synod's decisions on marriage can also be seen as a gesture to the Meccan community. Because the Meccan community hated the Christian clergy's practice of not marrying. Barsauma put this decision into practice by marrying a nun. Within a short period of time, the persecution of Christians increased, especially in the region of Ktesiphon-Seleucia, which supported Baboy. According to the late chronicles, Baboy sent a letter to the Roman Emperor Zenan, asking for help in dealing with the Sassanid ruler. However, his messenger was captured by Barsauma's men in Nusaybin and the letter fell into Sassanid hands. Baboy was then killed by the Sassanids.[318] Monophysite sources portray Catholicos Baboy as a just and pious bishop, whereas they describe Barsauma with very negative characteristics. Likewise, Barsauma, with the support of the state, committed massive massacres against the monophysite groups under Sassanid rule.

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316 The minutes of the Synod of Beth Lapat have not survived. Information about the adoption of Theodore's interpretations as authoritative is found in the minutes of the councils of Sabrisho 596 and Grigor 605. *Synodicon Orientale*, 458, 475.

317 *Synodicon Orientale*, 525, 531; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 137-138; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbâru Betârike*, 41-42; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/103-104.

318 Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 138-140, 144; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 42. This story is not mentioned in the letter of Shem'un of Beth Arsam, which is close to the date of the event. For an extensive discussion of the sources of this story, see Stephen Gero, *Barṣauma of Nisibis and Persian Christianity in the fifth century*, CSCO 426/Subsidia 63 (Louvain: Secretariat du CSCO, 1981), 97-109.

They also report.[319] Although incidents of violence against Monophysites are also mentioned in some Nestorian chronicles, Catholicos Baboy is portrayed with some negative characteristics.[320] What Monophysite sources report about Barsauma should be approached with caution. For although these sources criticize the way in which diophysite views were made dominant with the support of the Sassanids, they ignore the fact that the same methods were applied more severely to the diophysites in Rome. The authenticity of the exaggerated accounts of persecution and moral weakness about Barsauma seems highly questionable. Shem "un of Beth Arsham, the closest source to this period, mentions Barsauma's role in the spread of the Nestorian heresy and makes insulting remarks about him, but makes no reference to the killing of Monophysites or to moral failings such as adultery.[321] In 484, Piroz, who supported Barsauma, died and was replaced by Balas (484-488).[322] The new ruler did not continue the position of his predecessor, and Akak (484-496), a friend of Barsauma and a relative of Catholicos Baboy, was made Catholicos of the Urfa School.[323] Although Barsauma tried to fight against Akak at first, he stopped these activities both because the state support was in favor of the Catholicos and because he thought that the rivalry would create a weakness in the struggle against the Monophysites who were getting stronger. After all, Akak, like himself, held diophysite views. He softened the atmosphere by sending various letters to Akak and promised to remain loyal to him.

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[319] Bar Habreus, *al-Târih al-Kenise*, 2/12-16.

[320] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 137; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 45; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 34; Abona, *Tārihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/107-108. While the Nestorian chronicles attribute the crimes related to the increase of adultery to Babay, the Jacobite sources attribute it to Barsauma. see Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 137; Bar Habreus, *al-Târihu "l-Kenise*, 2/13.

[321] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/107. Previous studies on this subject had assumed that Barsauma, as characterized by monophysite sources, played an important role in the Nestorianization of the Eastern Church. More recent studies, however, acknowledge that Barsauma played an important role in the religious developments of the period, although it is not clear to what extent he played a decisive role. See Gero, *Barṣauma of Nisibis*, 94-96.

[322] M. L. Chaumont - K. Schippmann, "Balāš, Sasanian king of kings" *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (Accessed 15. 05. 2019).

[323] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 147; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbâru Betârike*, 43; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/108.

and reported it.[324] Shortly thereafter, the parties met at Beth Ardayi[325] (485) and reached a compromise. Here, all the decisions taken at the Synod of Beth Lapat were canceled and it was decided to convene a general synod next year.[326] As a matter of fact, a new council was convened in Seleucia the following year.

2.8.2. Council of Seleucia (486)

As previously agreed, the bishops gathered in Ctesiphon-Seleucia for the synod. Despite Akak's insistence, Barsauma politely stated that he could not attend the council for various reasons, but that he would accept any decision to be taken at the council. As a result, a council was organized with the participation of twenty-five bishops under the presidency of Mar Akak. Three very important decisions were taken at the council for the Eastern Church.

The first decision concerns the statement of faith. Accordingly, the monophysite view of Christology was rejected with the following statements:

> "The acceptance of a nature composed of three perfect persons [knoma], the acceptance of the one and eternal trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, must be the basis of faith for all of us. Such an acceptance defeats paganism and condemns the Jewish religion. Our faith in the incarnation of Jesus must be a recognition of the existence of two natures, divinity and humanity. None of us should mix or melt these two different natures together. Divinity retains its own characteristics and humanity retains its own characteristics. Because of the perfect and indissoluble [Syriac: nqifuto, Greek: sinafia] unity of divinity and humanity, we unite the differences of these two natures in one supreme being and one worship. If anyone thinks and inculcates in others that in the divinity of our Lord there is suffering and change, and does not recognize that in the person of our Savior [prosopon-parchopa] there is perfect God and perfect man, let him be accursed."[327]

The above passage is very important as it is the first cryptological statement of faith we have from the Eastern Church after the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. Although the wording and terminology clearly belong to the Antiochian tradition of Christology

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[324] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/109-110.
[325] *Synodicon Orientale*, 308. Beth Ardayi (Baedrê) is a settlement o f Yazidi emirs near Dohuk.
[326] For the correspondence between Barsauma and Akak, see Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/110.

Synodicon Orientale, 532-539; Gero, *Barṣauma of Nisibis*, 120-122.
[327] *Synodicon Orientale,* 301-302; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/113.

"Nestorian" as understood by opponents of the Eastern Church cannot be defined as a statement of faith.[328] It was only as a result of the propaganda of fervent Monophysites such as Axenoya of Manbij (Philoxenos of Mabbug) (d. 523) and Shem "un of Beth Arsham, who denounced them as Nestorian heretics, that the term Nestorian came to be accepted for this church.[329]

The second decree concerns monks and ascetics (Messalliens), who are called to live in monasteries and to leave villages and cities, and are forbidden to enter villages where there are clergy. Accordingly, monasteries should be built in remote places. The Messallien reject the church and form their own communities, distributing bread and wine and performing baptisms. According to the Synod, they cannot perform the religious ceremonies that the clergy must perform. They must abandon their heretical ideas about the incarnation of Christ and the teachings of the apostles. The third resolution, concerning marriage, reiterated the resolution adopted at the Synod of Beth Lapat (484). Accordingly, from now on, no clergyman can be forced to renounce marriage in the Church in which he serves. This is because the immoral relationships that have become widespread among the Christian community make them the laughing stock of foreigners (Magi). Clerics who cannot control themselves in sexual matters are advised to marry rather than burn in the fire of lust. Accordingly, in order to end this moral degeneration among the community, these traditions must be changed and a correct and moral life guided by the Gospel must be led. According to the decision of the Synod, clergy of any position can marry. Only devotees living in a monastery can take a vow of celibacy. A person who voluntarily abstains from marriage can maintain chastity only in the monastery. Bishops are not to force celibacy on seminarians.

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[328] Sebastian P. Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries: Preliminary Considerations and Materials", ed. G. Dragas, *Aksum-Thyateira: a Festschrift for Archbishop Methodios* (London: Thyateria House, 1985), 126; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 29-30.

[329] Bar Habreus states that during Catholicos Akak's embassy to Constantinople, in the face of the accusations of the western fathers, the name Nesturi was given to them by their enemy Aksenoya of Manbij. Bar Habreus, *al-Târihu "l-Kenise*, 2/16.

The office of deacon will only be given to those who are married. Adultery and self-sterilization are forbidden. Priests may marry a second wife if necessary (in the event of the death of the first wife). Accordingly, bishops, clergy and monastic monks who did not comply with this decree would be excommunicated.[330] The last two decisions are extremely important as they reflect the background of the Eastern Church's administrative functioning and social structure. The decisions taken here - except for one - are a repetition of the decisions taken two years earlier at the Synod of Beth Lapat organized by Barsauma. In this case, it is necessary to examine the reasons for the disagreement between Barsauma and Catholicos Baboy and his successor Akak. For this, there is a need to evaluate these decisions. The explanation of Christologicalbelief reflects the diophysite view of the Antiochian school. We have no evidence that Baboy held a monophysite view and therefore disagreed with Barsauma. Likewise, Akak graduated from the School of Urfa and it is known that he held the same views as Barsauma. Likewise, the correspondence regarding the disputes between Catholicos Baboy and Barsauma was prepared by his assistant Akak on behalf of the Catholicos. In this case, the decision to excommunicate Catholicos Baboy, which was adopted at the Synod of Beth Lapat but not discussed at the Synod of Seleucia, gives us a clue in this regard. The Church of Seleucia found it unacceptable that the Synod of Dadisho" violated the resolution prohibiting the excommunication of the Catholicos by the bishops. In this case, it can be stated that the authority of the catholicos and the position of the Church of Seleucia were at the center of the dispute between the two sides. Apparently, Barsauma wanted to make some changes in the church, but Catholicos Baboy was not in favor of these changes. So Barsauma and his friends wanted to change the Catholicos. This raises the question of what changes Barsauma wanted to make in the Church other than the official acceptance of the diophysite views. The answer to this question can be found in the background of the other two decisions.

[330] *Synodicon Orientale,* 302-305; Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 156-157; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/113-114.

It is possible to determine Why did the Eastern Church feel the need to make changes regarding monastic life and marriage?

Adday Sher, a prominent Chaldean cleric and writer at the turn of the last century, noted that Barsauma's marriage and his struggle with the ascetics have not been sufficiently studied during this period when the Nestorian Church entered a new phase.[331] According to him, not enough attention has been paid to the concentration of ascetics in the Christian community during this period. This is because researchers have focused almost exclusively on Barsauma and his friends' conversion of diophysite views into the official faith of the church. However, in the texts of the period, Barsauma and the Eastern Church were in constant struggle with the Messallians and their way of life for two hundred years. According to him, the monastic or ascetic life was deeply rooted in the East, and in the process this way of life had become quite corrupt. These groups, the so-called Messallians, rejected property ownership, civilization and work. They adopted a Bedouin lifestyle and were constantly on the move, refusing to settle permanently in one place. Men and women lived together.[332] The most important ritual of the Messallien was prayer. According to them, the church and its practices could not give the spiritual qualities of prayer. Individual experience and freedom were very important to them. They saw themselves as the temple of the Holy Spirit rather than the church. There was also no church authority to regulate monastic life.[333] This left the Church with two important problems. First, Christianity in this form was very unattractive to the Meccan community. Especially the vow of celibacy and the negative view of marriage were considered abhorrent by the Meccis. Therefore, both this lifestyle and the corruption within the church were ridiculed by the Meccan society.[334] In this case, the main reason for the regulations on marriage was

to put order to these ascetic tendencies, to stop the corruption and to stop the Sassanid

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[331] Adday Sher, "Messaliens and the Corrections of the Barsauma in Nusaybin in the Iranian Church", trans. Vedii İlmen, in *Nusaybin Academy* (Istanbul: YabaYayınları, 2006), 197-238.
[332] Sher, "Messaliens", 200- 202.
[333] Sher, "Messaliens", 206-210, 230.
[334] Sher, "Messaliens", 200-215.

as an attempt to remove the antipathy in the community. Secondly, this was the audience most likely to be won over by the Monophysites. The Monophysites traveled among ascetics and these renounced worlds in order to win new followers in Sassanid lands. They were trying to establish new churches under the name of monasteries for asceticism and ascetic life and to gather followers.[335] In terms of their tendencies, the Messallians seemed to be more inclined to the monophysite view that prioritized the divine nature.[336] In fact, the Messallians were not interested in dogma. But the struggle of the Eastern Church inevitably made it easier for the Monophysites to use this situation to spread. Therefore, with the decision of this council, the monasteries, which were very favorable to the spread of monophysite views, and the tendency of the Messallians towards monophysite views were tried to be controlled. It can be assumed that Barsauma, for social and political reasons, convinced Piroz to reorganize the Church and to carry out acts of violence against ascetic groups and monasteries. This synod, which initiated the "Nestorian" phase in the Eastern Church, also coincided with the struggle against these ascetic tendencies. Eventually, after a long struggle between the church and the Messallians, most of the Messallians were forced to move to Monophysite areas. Those who remained adapted to monastic life, which was beginning to be controlled by the Church.[337] It seems that this struggle of Barsauma was exploited and used by the Monophysites. Because monophysite sources show Baboy in monophysite thought. In this case, it can be thought that Barsauma's struggle with Baboy was due to the fact that the catholicos was not very willing to fight with the Messallians. After all, he himself had lived a monastic life and was involved in various corruptions during his catholicosate.[338]

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[335] Süleyman, *Ahbâru Betârike*, 44- 45; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 156-157.
[336] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 160-162.
[337] Sher, "Messaliens", 228-229.
[338] Sher, "Messaliens", 222-226

Monophysite sources are relatively positive about Catholicos Akak and state that he had to take the decisions of the Synod of Seleucia because of the fear of Barsauma, who had the support of the monarch. These sources attribute the corrupt system and immoral acts that Barsauma wanted to abolish to Barsauma and state that he led the Eastern Church to a great moral decline. For example, Bar Habreus relates the following dialog between the western fathers and Akak during Catholicos Akak's embassy in Constantinople (487): "We have learned that one of your bishops murdered the Catholicos before you and proclaimed decrees encouraging adultery. You did not prevent him. When you return, you will depose him."[339] When asked about the Nestorian heresy, he replied that he did not know Nestorius and his heretical teaching and that the name Nestorian was given to them by Ahsanoya of Manbij (Philoxenos of Mabbug). While here, Akak excommunicated Barsauma. When he returned to his country, he learned that Barsauma was dead.[340] However, these reports should be taken with caution. Because among the decisions of the Baboy Synod (497), which was to be held later, there was a decision to lift the excommunications of Akak and Barsauma against each other and to destroy the correspondence related to this period, we know that Barsauma did not die and the conflict between him and the Catholicos resumed (491).[341] It is clear from the chronicles of the Eastern Church and the synod collection that the disputes between Barsauma and Achak had nothing to do with the decisions adopted at the Synod of Seleucia. Catholicos Akak and the overwhelming majority of the other bishops accepted the adoption of these three resolutions and there were no objections. The conflict between Barsauma and Akak i s most likely related to church administration. Barsauma from 496

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[339] Bar Habreus, *al-Târih al-Kenise*, 2/16.
[340] Bar Habreus, *al-Târihu "l-Kenise*, 2/16. Medieval Nestorian chronicles tried to find reasonable reasons for Barsauma "s marriage in accordance with the spirit of the time. Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 45. The practice of marriage did not receive any serious reaction in the Nestorian Church and continued to exist for a long time.
[341] *Synodicon Orientale,* 312; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/116.

He died at an earlier date and Catholicos Akak died shortly after him in 496.[342]

Barsauma's struggle and life story can be considered the history of the reorganization of the Eastern Church. Even Shem of Beth Arsham, although more like a politician than a theologian and clergyman, never made any reference to his immoral life. He is apparently portrayed in a rather negative light because of his role in the official acceptance of Diophysite and Theodorian Christology and his relentless crusade against the Monophysites. Barsauma's methods in this relentless crusade were justified from his own point of view. Although monophysite views were suppressed in the Roman Empire after the Council of Chalcedon, these views spread to the eastern borders and quickly found adherents in Sassanid lands. As a result of the efforts of the Roman Emperor Zenon (474-491) to reconcile the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon and the Monophysites with the Edict of Henotikon, the Monophysites' re-establishment of activity began to become a significant danger. As a matter of fact, during the reign of the emperor Anastasios (491-518), who came to the throne after Zenon, the Monophysites' activity increased even more with the patronage of the Monophysites and they started to establish spheres of influence in the Sassanid region. The dismissal of some bishops of the Eastern Church at the Synod of Babay in 497 due to their adoption of Monophysite views reveals the extent of this activity. Especially Shem "un of Beth Arsham played an important role in the spread of monophysite views among the Arabs under Sassanid rule. The region of Nusaybin, where Barsauma was bishop, was the gateway through which monophysite views entered the country. Given all this, we can conclude that Barsauma, somehow with the support of the Sassanid government, tried to prevent the Monophysites from increasing their influence and to prevent the diophysite

[342] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 147-148; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 43-47, Abona, *Tārihu'l-Keniseti'sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/115-116; *Edebu'l-Lughati'l-Ārāmiyya*, 127.

It seems quite plausible that the Church of the East sought to establish a partnership between the Eastern Church and Sassanid rule in order for the view to survive.

2.8.3. The Council of Babay (497) and the break with the West

After the death of the Sassanid ruler Balas (488), Kubad became the ruler. However, he was deposed by the Iranian nobles and clergy because of his inclination towards the Mazdakis and Zamasp (496-498) was enthroned in his place.[343] After Catholicos Akak, Babay/Babai (497-502/3) was elected as Catholicos. According to the chronicles, the elderly Catholicos was married and had children. Although he was virtuous, well-mannered and understood administrative affairs,[344] he could neither read nor write.[345] The Sassanid ruler Zamasp had good relations with his Christian subjects.[346] In the Roman Empire, Anastasios (491-518) was sitting and he was more supportive of the Monophysites than Zenon. Because Rome's alienation of the Christians on its eastern border had weakened the state against the Sassanids. The Monophysites were waging a fierce struggle against the Diophysites with prominent figures such as Severus (d. 538), Philoxenos of Manbij (d. 523), James of Suruc (d. 521), and Barsauma's Monophysite counterpart, Shem "un of Beth Arsham. By this time, monophysite views had ossified among the Assyrians living in Roman lands. The Ghassanid Arabs began to adopt the monophysite view, and with the efforts of Shem "un, it began to spread among the Arabs of the Sassanids.[347] The Eastern Church felt the need to organize a synod in order to prevent both the increasing activity of the Monophysites and their being seen by the Magi as close to the Mazdekis.[348]

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[343] Jamsheed K. Choksy, "Jāmāsp I. Reign," *Encyclopædia Iranica* (Accessed 27 05. 2019).
[344] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 162.
[345] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 46.
[346] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 46-47; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 36-37; Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/117.
[347] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/125-144
[348] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/118.

In 497, 39 bishops gathered in Seleucia-Ctesiphon and took various decisions at a synod. Accordingly, from the catholicos, the highest clergyman in the church, to the lowest clergyman, marriage to a single wife was legally recommended. A person whose spouse has died may marry a second time. The decisions of the previous councils of Beth Lapat, Beth Adri and Seleucia, and the true teaching therein, were accepted. The mutual excommunications of Barsauma and Achaeus were lifted, and it was decided to destroy the decisions and documents related to them from the period 491-496. The decision made by the ancient Fathers concerning the primacy and dignity of the apostolic Great Church of Kokhe was affirmed, and it was stated that the catholicos, the supreme head of this Church, would be obeyed in harmony. It was agreed to hold a general synod every four years. If within a year the Metropolitan of Beth Lapat, Papa, and the Bishop of Rev Ardeshir, Yazdad, did not come to declare their allegiance to the catholicos and accept the Church's teaching, they would be excommunicated. The consecrations of bishops appointed during the period of turmoil and strife will be accepted if they are duly consecrated, but not if they are not.[349]

When the decisions of the council are evaluated, it is seen that the decisions of the previous councils on Christology, marriage and church functioning were repeated more strongly. Thus, the diophysite views of Theodore of Mopsuestia were firmly accepted. Another important decision of this council was undoubtedly the reference to the apostolic origin of the Kokhe Church in Seleucia-Ctesiphon and the statement that the Eastern Church was like its western counterparts. In a way, this situation brought about the acceptance of the Patriarch of the East as the supreme ruler of the Church.[350] The decision on the two excommunicated bishops shows that Monophysites were gaining influence in the region. The strong wording of the decision on the marriage arrangement shows both that they had nothing to do with the Mazdek doctrine and that the Mazdakite teachings were not relevant to their own society.

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[349] *Synodicon Orientale,* 311-315; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/119-120.
[350] Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 52; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya*, 1/120.

It is possible to see it as an effort to prevent his possible influence on Iran. Because with the spread of Mazdak's views, the Meccan clergy and the Iranian nobles were in great fear. Therefore, Kubad, who supported the Mazdakis, had been deposed a short time before and Zahmasb was made ruler in his place.[351]

2.8.4. Mar Narsay (399-502) and the Nusaybin School

Mar Narsay, who undertook the theological defense of Diophysite views among the Christians in the Sassanid region, and the Nusaybin School he developed, played a crucial role in this critical phase of the Eastern Church. Although Seleucia-Ctesiphon continued to be the patriarchal center of the Eastern Church, Nusaybin was for a long time the most important center for theology and religious sciences. Most of the clergy who held high positions in the Eastern Church graduated from here. Mar Narsay was born near Ma "alta in 399.

"He was born in the village of Ayn Dulba.* He was first educated by his uncle and then completed his education at the School of Urfa. Here he was influenced by the diophysite views and biblical interpretations of his friends such as Barsauma, Akak and Theodore of Mopsuestia. He later became a teacher and administrator at this school. Here he defended Theodorian Christology and was at odds with the Monophysites. As attacks on the Diophysites increased,[352] he left Urfa and came to Nusaybin to go to Persia. Barsauma, the bishop of Nusaybin, convinced him to stay in Nusaybin, saying that this was the most suitable place to open a school in the Sassanid region, "If you open a school here, students will come to you from all sides and you will stand against heresies". Thus, the Nusaybin School was opened and Narsay served as its director until his death. Nusaybin

[351] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 158-161; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 45-46.
* Today Malta is a neighborhood of Dohuk.
[352] Reportedly, the Monophysites wanted to kill him. Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 44; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 149.

His school quickly became famous and students began to flock to it from both sides of the border, including Urfa. It became an important theological base where the diophysite views of Theodore of Mopsuestia were taught and the most important center for training the clergy of the Eastern Church.[353] Although there are many works attributed to Mar Narsay, probably the most important poet of the Eastern Church, eighty memras have survived.[354] In his interpretation of the Bible, Mar Narsay continued the method of Theodore of Mopsuestia. The events of the Old Testament are considered in their context before being considered in the type of the events of the New Testament.[355] Mar Narsay's monophysite counterpart was Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, and James of Suruc (d. 521), who defended the monophysite view. Although it is not known whether they met in person in Urfa, both share many common themes, motifs and approaches that reflect the Urfa background. Narsay focuses on salvation history as a continuous learning process for humanity. He places great emphasis on the two natures (divine and human) retaining their respective characteristics in the incarnation of Christ. In his memoir "Three Greek Teachers" he defends Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius. This memra represents an important stage in the theological and exegetical tradition of the Eastern Church, which was largely based on Theodore's views and interpretations.[356]

The Nusaybin School did important work in theology, philosophy and liturgy. Especially Hellenic philosophy and Aristotelian logic were emphasized. Aristotle's *Organon* and Porphyrius' works on logic such as *Isagogy were taken* as basis for interpreting the Bible. After Narsay, Elisho bar Kuzboya (Quzboya) (502-509) became the head of the school. At the request of the Sassanid ruler Kubad, he prepared a Persian work on Christianity and presented it to the ruler. Abraham Beth

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[353] Sher, *Akadamisi of Nusaybin*, 174-181; *Vakayinamesi of Siirt*, 149-152; Lucas Van Rompay, "Narsai", *GEDSH*, 303-304; The sources give the dates 437 or after 450 for his teaching and administration at the School of Urfa and 457 and 471 for his departure from Urfa.
[354] For Narsay's works, see Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 117-118; Abona, *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 117-126.
[355] Morrison, "Exegesis, New Testament", 161.
[356] Rompay, "Narsai", 303-304.

Rabban (509-569) was one of the most important administrators of the Nusaybin School, and during his reign the number of students reached nearly a thousand. Most of the leading catholicos, bishops and writers of the period such as Mar Aba, Ibrahim of Kesker, Iso "yab Erzeni, Abraham of Nusaybin, Bar "Ita, Yusuf Hazzaya, Dadişo", Sabrişo" were his students. Iso "yab Erzeni (569-571) was the director of the Nusaybin School before becoming the Catholicos. After Mar Abraham of Nusaybin (d. 572) served as director of the school for a year and died, Henana of Erbilli (572-610) took over.[357]

To summarize what has been said so far, the diophysite view of the Antiochian school and the monophysite view of the Alexandrian school confronted each other in the debates that arose around the identity of Jesus in the early V century, and the Alexandrian school prevailed in both Councils of Ephesus and the diophysite view was rejected. The Christological view accepted at the Council of Chalcedon did not satisfy both sides. Later on, when the Roman Empire supported the monophysite view advocated by the Alexandrian school, which had a wide base in the east, the proponents of the diophysite view were forced to leave Roman territory. The Antiochian Christology, which had already taken root in Sassanid lands at an earlier date through the School of Urfa and gained a large following, became the official view of the Eastern Church with the establishment of the Nusaybin School and a series of synodal decisions. Thus, three main groups emerged in the Christian world: the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon, the Monophysites and the Diophysites. At the same time, Syriac-speaking Christians were divided into Diophysites (under Sassanid rule) and Monophysites (under Roman rule) and began to clash with each other. For the Eastern Church, then, the period before Catholicos Baboy (484) should be considered as a part of the history of the universal Church, and the period after his official acceptance of Diophysite Christology as a period in which he took his own independent course.

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[357] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia*, 180-184.

possible.[358] The Eastern Church was called the heretical Nestorian Church, especially by its monophysite opponents, and this designation became accepted by the rest of the Christian world. At the synod organized by Catholicos Baboy in 497, the bishopric of Ctesiphon-Seleucia was given the title of Patriarchate of the East and declared to be independent from the rest of the Christian churches in all areas. This new positioning of the Eastern Church was seen by the Christian world in the Roman Empire not only as a division but also as a heresy. After this period, it was often referred to as the Nestorian Church. However, the Eastern Church spread far beyond the borders of the Sassanid Empire and the spiritual jurisdiction of the catholicos of the Eastern Church was wider than that of any other church hierarchy.[359]

2.8.5. Nestorius and the Eastern Church

For hundreds of years, many Christian theologians and church historians considered the Eastern Church to be a church that adopted the views of the heretic Nestorius and called it the Nestorian Church. According to them, Nestorius argued for "the existence of two persons in the incarnate Christ" and this view was accepted by the Eastern Church. However, as it is clear from what we have quoted above about the adoption of Antioch's diophysite Christology as the official view of the Eastern Church, Nestorius was not referred to in the synods organized by the Eastern Church, and his name was not mentioned in the minutes of any council. In fact, Nestorius, who was constantly referred to and excommunicated in the Councils of Ephesus, the Council of Chalcedon and the Edict of Henotikon, was not well known in the East, although he was constantly kept on the agenda in the West. The only document in this period in which Nestorius' name is mentioned is Mar Narsay's memra entitled "The Three Greek Teachers". When this memorandum is carefully analyzed

[358] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 75.
[359] Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 52.

Narsai seems to have known little about the views of Diodore of Tarsus, much about those of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and nothing about those of Nestorius. In this memoir Nestorius is portrayed as a martyr of the Antiochian Christological tradition, exiled by the Egyptian Pharaoh (Cyril). In the perception of the Eastern Church, Nestorius is a symbol who fell victim to Cyril's machinations and suffered on behalf of the oppressed Antiochian cause. The Eastern Church persistently referred to Theodore of Mopsuestia in its synods, recognized him as the greatest master and guide, and cherished his biblical interpretations and christological views. During this period, Theodore of Mopsuestia did not come up much in the West.[360] In the eight councils held in the Eastern Church between 486-612, Nestorius' name was not mentioned even once, but Theodore of Mopsuestia's name was used many times as an authority on matters of doctrine and as an example of true faith. Although Mopsuestian's works were translated into Syriac at an early period, Nestorius' work was translated into Syriac only in 540 during the reign of Mar Aba. The most important distinction attributed to him in the Eastern Church is the allocation to him of one of the three liturgical modes (anaphora), two of which were attributed to Adday-Mari and Theodore of Mopsuestia. His name appears several times in the Hudra and other liturgical books. In fact, if one had to give a name to the Eastern Church, it would make more sense to call it "Theodorian" rather than "Nestorian".[361] So why is the Eastern Church, which has almost no knowledge of Nestorius' views and no claim to accept him as an authority on theology and Christology, persistently called the Nestorian Church? Apparently, this was due to the fact that Nestorius was excommunicated and portrayed as a heretic in all the councils held in the West during this period; both for the monophysite and the pro-Chalcedonian Christians, the Antiochian Christology and the diophysite views

[360] Theodore was excommunicated for the first time at the 553 ecumenical council and his works were banned.
[361] Brock, "Nestorian Church", 104-106; "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 88.

"In Late Antiquity, just as in modern politics, people used to describe their opponents as sharing the views of groups that were isolated and on one or more levels of the theological spectrum. Sebastian P. Brock explains that "In Late Antiquity, as in modern politics, people attempted to smear their opponents by portraying them as sharing the views of groups that were one or more levels further down the theological spectrum and had been isolated".[362] In addition, Nestorius' inability to actively participate in these debates due to the fact that he spent the rest of his life in exile after his dismissal seems to have been effective in his being chosen as a scapegoat, so to speak, in these debates. He has always been a sacrificial figure chosen by the Roman emperors who were in favor of the Council of Chalcedon in order to appease the people who adopted the monophysite view in the East. In the Roman Empire phase of the Christological debates, his friends also had to endure his excommunication to prevent the monophysite view from being accepted.

2.9. The Sixth Century of the Eastern Church

In the first half of the VIth century, the Eastern Church entered a period of stagnation, which was characterized by various administrative turmoil and conflicts within the church. The closeness established with the Sassanid government soon led to the interference of the political authority in the internal functioning of the church and the election of patriarchs. Kubad (488-531), who was removed from the throne, soon returned and took the throne from Zamasp, and later in his reign, he oppressed the Mazdekis. During this period, good relations were established with both the Armenian Christians and the Eastern Church.[363] Despite the good relations with the Sassanids, the period from Babay (d. 502) to the patriarchate of Mar Aba (540-552) was marked by turmoil in the church administration and various divisions. After Catholicos Mar Babay, he was again married and had a son.

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[362] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 89.

[363] Nikolaus Schindel, "Kavad I", *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, (Accessed 29. 05. 2019); Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 162, 177.

His daughter, the archdeacon Shila (503-523), was appointed as Catholicos. The influence of Bozok, the bishop of Hormuzd Ardashir (Ahwaz), in the Sassanid court was effective in this. A bishop named Mari who opposed this was excommunicated. Although he is described in the chronicles as a learned man, he is also portrayed as arrogant, preoccupied with worldly affairs and a lover of money. These chronicles report that until the death of Shila, Christians lived in peace and many churches were built.[364] In the meantime, the Roman Emperor Justin I (Iustinus) (518-527) again began to implement the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon, deposed all the monophysite bishops in Syria and Egypt, and launched a massive prosecution of those who adopted this view. Severus, patriarch of Antioch, fled to Egypt and Philoxenos of Manbij was exiled. Some Monophysites fled to Sassanid lands and Shila used various repressions against them.[365] Before his death, Shila stirred up great controversy by appointing Elisha, his son-in-law and a physician, as his successor. He is reported to have bribed the Sassanid government for this. However, some of the bishops did not accept Elisha as patriarch and wanted to elect Narsai, Bishop of Hira, as patriarch. As a result, each of these bishops began to rule his own favored diocese. Meanwhile, the Sassanid ruler Kubad died and was succeeded by Khusraw I (Anushirvan) 531-579. The division between the two bishops worsened, and the Christian community engaged in bloody conflicts and excommunicated each other. In this process, the political authority supported Elisha. However, this division and turmoil continued until the death of Narsay in 538. Elisha ruled alone, but died shortly afterwards. Then in 539 the bishops met and elected Paul, the successor of Bozok, the bishop of Hormuzd Ardashir (Ahwaz), as patriarch. The names of Elisha and Narsai were deleted from the list of patriarchs. Paul was not from either party.

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[364] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 167, 177; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 47; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 37; Bar Habraus, *al-Tārih al-Kenisha,* 2/ 17; Abona, *Tārih al-Keniseti al-Sharqiyya,* 1/121-122.
[365] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 169-175; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 48.

and had the sympathy of the political authority. However, he died in the same year.[366] It is important to evaluate Mar Aba and his reforms in this period.

2.9.1. Mar Aba (540-552) and his reforms

Mar Aba was born in Radan, south of Kirkuk, the son of a Meccan cleric. While working as a clerk to the Sassanid governor in Beth Aramaya (Babylon), he converted to Christianity based on a legend narrated in the chronicles. He then traveled to Nusaybin and Erzen, where he received religious education. He learned Greek from his friend Toma of Urfa, and together they traveled to Roman lands, visiting Palestine and Egypt, then Istanbul. After a year there, he returned to Nusaybin, where he engaged in education. He quickly distinguished himself with his deep religious knowledge and his fluency in Persian, Syriac and Greek. After the death of Catholicos Paul, he was elected Catholicos with the approval of Hosrev I (Anushirvan). He started to work to restore order in the Eastern Church, which had been in division and turmoil for some time, with almost every bishop acting independently. First of all, he traveled with some bishops to various dioceses in the country and during this trip he dismissed some bishops. He opened a school in Seleucia. According to the chronicles, after establishing order in the church, he gave importance to missionary activities and as a result many Magi became Christians.[367]

Mar Aba organized a synod in 544, which led to a series of reforms in church administration and liturgy. The synod issued six documents and forty canons. Accordingly, in order to maintain order in the administration and governance of the dioceses, regulations were made that imposed formal binding obligations on those in charge. In particular, he was asked to

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[366] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 177-180; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 49; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 37-39; Bar Habraus, *al-Tārih al-Kenise,* 2/18-19; Abona, *Tārih al-Kenise*, 1/123. [367] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 181-194; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 49-53; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 39-41; Abona, *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 132-136; *Tārih al-Keniseti al-Sharqiyya,* 1/145-147.

He tried to resolve the administrative problems arising from the conflict between the two previous bishops. Accordingly, there would be only one bishop in each city. Concerning the Orthodox faith, the following words were expressed:

> "The Apostles had not learned from the Holy Spirit that Jesus was an ordinary man, nor that He was God stripped of the human garment in which He was manifested. But they had learned that Christ was God and man. That is why the phrase "God, your God, anointed you with the oil of gladness and raised you above your fellows" is about his humanity. On the other hand, "In the beginning was the Word" has to do with his divinity. ... and cursed be he who adds a fourth to the holy and immutable Trinity. And whoever does not confess that at the end of time the Only Begotten Son of God was manifested in the flesh, and that he is Christ our Lord, let him be accursed. And whoever does not believe that Christ's humanity suffered and died, and that his divinity is free from [these things], let him be accursed. Cursed be anyone who does not direct his prayer to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and adds a fourth person to them, or who does not believe that the title of Son indicates the divinity and humanity of Jesus at the same time, or who does not acknowledge the Trinity when he prays to Jesus."[368]

Various reforms were made to ensure a better and fairer administration between the church leaders and their congregations and to eliminate abuses. Relations between clergy and lay people were regulated. Accordingly, the task of dealing with material and financial affairs was left to people other than the clergy. Jewish and Magian marriage practices among the Christian community; polygamy and intermarriage were banned. The patriarchates of Elisha and Narsay and the dispositions made during their reign were annulled. The metropolitans of Beth Lapat and Nusaybin, two important dioceses of the Eastern Church, were linked directly to the patriarchal chair in Seleucia as long as Mar Aba lived. A new system of patriarchal election was introduced. Accordingly, in order to be a candidate for patriarch, one had to possess certain virtues related to good morals. Those who harbor worldly ambitions or those who covet worldly goods cannot be candidates for patriarch. In addition, all or at least three of the four major metropolitans (Beth Lapat, Euphrates Misan, Erbil and Kirkuk) must agree on the new patriarch to be elected.

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[368] *Synodicon Orientale,* 542-543; Sebastian P. Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", pp. 134-135; Bishara Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East, An Analysis of Christological Statements and Professions of Faith of the Official Synods of the Church of the East before A.D. 612", in *OCP* 82 (Rome: 2016), 364, 367.

to be a member of the government. In addition to these, some forty other resolutions were adopted. These resolutions laid down many rules for the social life of Christians. Finally, the commitment to the Council of Nicaea and to the Commentator Theodore of Mopsuestia was reiterated.[369]

Mar Aba restored the church in a short time with his skillful administration. In the meantime (540-545), there was a war between the Sassanids and the Romans. His failure to actively support Hosrev I during the war raised suspicions about him. In fact, unlike the previous catholicos who made various gestures towards the Majusi community, Mar Aba's efforts to keep the Christian community away from other religious traditions, his disapproval of clergy marriages[370] and his conversion of many Majusi to Christianity as a result of his missionary activities caused discomfort among the Sassanid administration and the Majusi clergy. He was accused of various crimes and exiled to Genzik near Urmia, an important religious center of the Magi. According to the chronicles, although he lived in exile for seven years, he continued to lead the church with his letters. Although his sentence was later commuted and his relations with the ruler improved again, he died in 542 due to his ill-treatment and was buried with a magnificent ceremony. One of his important activities was the translation of many works from Greek into Syriac, especially the Old Testament, the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius. The works attributed to him have not survived. Some of the prayers and rosaries he added to the church liturgy are used to this day.[371]

His successor, Catholicos Yusuf (552-570), who was elected despite Mar Aba's reforms, showed prudence in the first years of his rule, but later showed a shortsighted administration. Yusuf, whose main profession was as a doctor, was appointed as Catholicos with the approval of Hosrev I.

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[369] *Synodicon Orientale,* 551-561; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/147-150.
[370] He forbade Catholicos to marry. Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 185.
[371] Abona, *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 137-140; *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/146-147.

was appointed. In 554, 23 decisions were taken at the council he organized. The council's statement of faith reads as follows:

> "We maintain the orthodox belief in the two natures of Christ, first of all in His divinity and humanity. And we exclude the characteristics of both natures from any admixture, corruption, or transubstantiation and change. Likewise, we maintain the number of the trinity's uknum [knoma] to be three, and confess the one true and inexpressible unity of the one God, the Father of truth, in His one true Son. If anyone thinks or says that there are two Christs or two Sons, and on any pretext or in any manner, revives a quaternity, we have excommunicated and will excommunicate such a one, and consider them to be excluded from the Christian community."[372]

Soon after the council, Catholicos Joseph began to mismanage the church and earned the hatred of most of the bishops. The opposition bishops mobilized against his oppressive and arbitrary rule, which lasted for a long time. Although the opponents dismissed him in 567 and proclaimed Ezekiel (Hazqiel I) (570-581), who was married, as Catholicos in his place, Catholicos Yusuf remained in office until his death.[373] Information about various oppressions against Christians during this period is reported in martyrdom narratives. Accordingly, especially the conversion activities of Iranian nobles were tried to be prevented. In this respect, the construction of new churches was also prohibited. It is understood that these pressures were especially related to the wars between Rome and Sassanids in 555-562.[374] Another important development of this period was the organization of three-day theological discussion meetings, including representatives from the Eastern Church, with the call of the Roman emperor Justinian (Iustinianus) (527-565) around 562 after the peace treaty between Rome and the Sassanids.[375] Ezekiel, a disciple of Mar Aba, who became Catholicos in 570 after the death of Catholicos Joseph, studied medicine like his predecessor. He demonstrated prudent leadership and w o n t h e favor of the bishops. I.

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[372] *Synodicon Orientale,* 354- 355.
[373] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 197-202; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 53-54; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārika*, 41-43; Abona, *Tārih al-Keniseti al-Sharqiyya,* 1/150-153.
[374] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/154.
[375] Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 205-206. This discussion will be dealt with extensively in the second chapter.

He accompanied Khosrow in his siege of the city of Daraa in 573.[376] In 576, a council was held in which 39 decisions were taken. One of the noteworthy decisions of this council was the mention of the activities of the Messallenes, who were allegedly living with men and women, and the measures to be taken against them. Another decision was that the liturgy would always include prayers for Hosrev I.[377] During his catholicosate, Khosrev I died and was succeeded by Hormuz IV.

During this period, important theological and religious developments took place in the Byzantine Empire. Emperor Justinian (527-565), like his predecessor, pursued a policy of implementing the views of the Council of Chalcedon. However, in order to overcome the discomfort of the Monophysites, who were concentrated in the eastern regions of the state, he tried to carry out various activities to bring the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon and the Monophysites together at one point. He allowed his wife Theodora, who held the Monophysite view, to patronize the Monophysites and thus tried to establish a balance between the two poles of the Christian world. In order to bring both sides together, the Theodorian Diophysites were again chosen as victims. At the 553 Council of Constantinople, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrus and Hiba, who went down in history as the "Three Chapters", were excommunicated along with their works and letters. However, this did not fully convince the Monophysites. Since the patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria had been taken away from the Monophysites, the clerical hierarchy was about to end. The defeats suffered in the wars with the Sassanid ruler Khusraw I showed how important the Monophysites were for the security of the eastern border. With the efforts of the Ghassanid emir Haris b. Jabalah, Yakub Burd'oyo was allowed to reorganize the Monophysite Church after the importance of the Monophysites against the Sassanids was understood. Through his efforts, monophysite churches were reorganized in Syria and Mesopotamia.

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[376] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 210-212; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 54-55; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 43-44; Abona, *Tārih al-Keniseti al-Sharqiyya,* 1/158-159.
[377] *Synodicon Orientale*, 375, 380; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/160-161.

was revitalized. During this period, the Monophysites accelerated their activities in the Sassanid lands. Indeed, in 559, Ahudammeh (d.575) was appointed by Jacob Burd "oyo as the first metropolitan (mafiryan) of the east.[378] Therefore, it is possible to see the decision taken at the synod of 576 regarding the Messallenes as a reflection of the Monophysites increasing their activities in the region. It is noticeable that the Eastern Church began to enter a period of stagnation.

2.9.2. Recession Period

After the death of Catholicos Ezekiel, some bishops wanted to elect Ayub and others wanted to elect Isho'yab as the new Catholicos. The situation was presented to Hormuz IV, who came to the throne after Hosrev I and was tolerant towards Christians, and he ordered the election of Isho'yab I (582-596) as Catholicos. Beth

"Born in the region of Arbaya, he studied under Abraham Beth Rabban at the Nusaybin School. After serving as the director of the Nusaybin School for two years (569-571), he became the bishop of Erzen (Garzan). During his tenure there, he informed the Sassanid government about the movements of the Roman army. Because of these services, the ruler wanted him to become a catholicos and showed him closeness during his tenure.[379] When Isho "yab I became Catholicos, the Eastern Church was facing serious problems. Since 572, Henana of Erbilli, the head of the School of Nusaybin, had followed the Alexandrian method of interpretation and emphasized allegorical interpretation.[380] He rejected the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia and instead began to defend the views of John of the Golden Mouth. He leaned toward the Christological views of the Council of Chalcedon, and many bishops adopted his views. In the School of Nusaybin, he abolished the interpretations of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and he was succeeded by Narsay.

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[378] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/137-144, 174; Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 388-396.
[379] Mar Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia,* 183; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 212, 298-299; Mari b. Süleyman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 55-56; Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/164.
[380] Bishara Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 391, footnote 157.

some of the prayers and rosaries that had been established. This caused a split in the church that would continue for a long time. Despite his excommunication, he continued to teach in the school according to his own views until his death (610).[381] Another important problem was that the Monophysites intensified their activities in the Sassanid region and began to gather many followers. As a result of the activities of Yaqub Burd "oyo, the first Monophysite diocese was established in Tikrit and Ahudammeh began to serve as the metropolitan of the east. However, due to the intervention of the Eastern Church, Ahudammeh was assassinated by Khusraw I in 575. But despite all these obstacles, the Tur Abidin region continued to be a gateway for monophysite views. Likewise, the Arab tribes of the Ghassanids provided material and moral support for the spread of monophysite views. The division between the Nusaybin School and the bishops of the Eastern Church, caused by Henana of Erbilli, facilitated the work of the Monophysites. Taking advantage of the death of Hosrev I in 579, the Monophysites reemphasized their activities, turned the Monastery of Mar Matta near Mosul into an important base and gained many followers in Erbil and Nusaybin.[382] It is understood that the Messallians, who were widespread in this region, facilitated the work of the Monophysites. The Eastern Church organized a synod in 585 to find a solution to all these problems.

In the introduction to the synod, after the expressions of respect and condolence to the ruler, the apostolicity of the Church of Seleucia is referred to and loyalty to the Patriarch of the East is expressed. The first article affirms the belief in the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople. It denies that the characteristics of Christ's human nature or his sufferings affected the divine nature; the perfect union of the divine and human natures does not allow for this.

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[381] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/170; *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 166-167. Although Henana is criticized in the Nestorian chronicles, his student Barhadbsabba speaks highly of him. See Bar-Hadbsabba, *Mesopotamia,* 183-184.

[382] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/174-179.

is explained. Against those who believe in Christ's divine nature and deny his human nature, against those who believe in his human nature and deny his divine nature, against those who deny his divinity and believe him to be an ordinary human being, and against those who accept him only as a superior human being, the unity of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ (prosopon) is taught. The second article states that the heretical statements about Theodore of Mopsuestia, the teacher of the Church, are unacceptable. Indeed, John of the Golden Mouth also confessed him and his teachings to be true. No one can reject the teachings and authority of the church teacher (Theodore). It appears that this resolution was adopted in relation to Henana of Erbilli and his companions. The eighth and ninth articles deal with the rules concerning Messallians, monks and monastic life. Accordingly, those who despise the prayers and sacraments of the Church and who travel as wanderers with men and women or stay in monasteries in this way are rejected. They are asked to obey the clergy with regard to religious rituals. Men and women are forbidden to live in the same monastery. This is reported to have been especially common in Assyria (Mosul) and neighboring areas, where monks were said to have built many monasteries. Here, women are reported to have lived alone in a male monastery and it is argued that this had various drawbacks.[383] This region stands out as a region where Monophysites were active.

Shortly after the synod, a coup d'état in the Sassanid Empire caused Isho'yab I to fall out of favor. Hosrev II (590-628), who rebelled against his father, sought refuge with the Byzantine Emperor Maurice (Maurikios) (582-602). The Emperor married him to his daughter Maria (Mary) and helped him to ascend to the throne. Hosrev II, who accepted Emperor Maurice as his spiritual father in the face of these aids, was very angry with the patriarch who did not support him during these struggles. The Roman forces that supported the new ruler were also on the patriarch's border.

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[383] *Synodicon Orientale,* 390-423; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/164-165.

and their activities against them in the tributaries. Because of all these, the patriarch had a very difficult time.[384] Shirin, one of Husrev II's Christian wives, was a monophysite and Maria, Maurice's daughter, was a supporter of the Council of Chalcedon. Each of them supported the churches and bishops of their own views. Therefore, Isho'yab I was persona non grata in the eyes of both of them. In this situation, especially the Monophysites began to gain significant power in the Sassanid court. The events that would unfold shortly afterward would further reinforce this. Isho'yab I, who was in a very difficult situation as a result of the activities of both the Monophysites and the pro-Chalcedonian Council of Chalcedonist Henana of Erbilli and his friends, found the solution to take refuge with Numan b. Munzir, the king of Khira, who was converted to Christianity by the Diophysites, and died there in 595/6.[385]

After Patriarch Isho'yab I, five patriarchal candidates emerged. Among them, Hosrev II found the elderly Sabrisho (596-604), whom he had seen his help before, suitable for the patriarchate. Sabrisho was born near Kirkuk, educated in Nusaybin and lived a monastic life for a long time. Many miracles are attributed to him in the Eastern Church. Taking advantage of this closeness of the ruler, the new patriarch organized a council in 596.[386] In this council, harsh decisions were taken against Henana and his followers and the Messallians. Accordingly, it was stated that the cryptological view and interpretations of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who had been considered the greatest authority in the Eastern Church since the Council of Beth Lapat (484), were indispensable, and those who deviated from the Interpreter's views were excommunicated. Those who denied the divine and human nature of Christ, those who confused and combined the peculiar characteristics of these two natures were rejected.[387]

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[384] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 299-302, 319-322.

[385] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 329-332; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbâru Betârike*, 56-57; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbâru Fetârike*, 44-49; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Sharqiyya,* 1/166-167. Mari b. Suleiman and Amr b. Metta give information about the statement of faith that Isho "yab I was sent to Istanbul as an envoy and presented to Emperor Maurikios. According to this, the emperor said to the catholicos that if Nestorius said what you say, he is not a heretic. Mari b. Suleiman, *Akhbāru Betārike*, 56-57; Amr b. Metta, *Akhbāru Fetārike*, 46. However, it was actually Isho'yab II who carried out this embassy mission, and this story is also historically doubtful.

[386] Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 326-350; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 57-60; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru*

Fetārike, 49-51; Abona, *Tārih al-Keniseti al-Sharqiyya,* 1/168.
[387] *Synodicon Orientale,* 456-460; Braun, *Das Bush der Synhados*, 302.

One of Sabrisho's first actions was to appoint Grigor of Kashkari as bishop of Nusaybin. Although Grigor of Kashkari fought Henana fiercely, he was not successful because of Henana's supporters in the Sassanid court. He banned Henana's books and excommunicated Henana and the Nusaybin notables who supported him. He expelled the Messallien-like clergy from Sinjar. Grigor of Kashkar was deposed by the administration and Sabrisho was forced to accept this.[388] In protest against both the patriarch and Henana, the majority of the students of the Nusaybin School left in 582.[389] In order to narrow the sphere of influence of the Nusaybin metropolitanate, Sabrisho" attached part of it directly to the patriarchal center. Here he activated the monastery of Bar Kiti (Qiti/Qaiti) near Sinjar, gathered some of the Messallians there and tried to organize monastic life according to church rules. Thus, he wanted to prevent them from wandering in villages and cities[390] and partially succeeded in this.

In 602, Phocas (602-610) killed the Byzantine Emperor Maurice and ascended the throne. In response, Hosrev II started a war against Byzantium that would last for many years. The old patriarch Sabrisho accompanied the ruler to Nusaybin, where he died. Hosrev II besieged Daraa but could not take it.[391] When he returned to the capital, he ordered the election of a new patriarch. Most of the bishops wanted Grigor of Kashkari, who was prominent in the fight against Henana and the Monophysites, to be the patriarch. However, the Monophysites and the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon, who had gained strength in the palace, made attempts to prevent this at the palace, and especially with the efforts of Shirin, his fellow countryman Euphrates Misanli, one of the teachers of the Seleucia School

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[388] Sher, *Nusaybin Academy*, 70, 73.
[389] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 350-353; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/170.
[390] *Synodicon Orientale,* 461-470; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/169-170.
[391] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 344-345.

Grigor (605-609) was elected as the new patriarch.[392] Patriarch Grigor organized a synod in 605. At the synod, it was declared more emphatically than at the previous synod that the Eastern Church was bound to the views and interpretations of Theodore of Mopsuestia. All teachings hostile to Theodore were excommunicated. For Henana and his friends had expelled his teachings from the church and had abolished the singing of various hymns of Narsay in the liturgy. The Synod excommunicated them and made these hymns, which had been removed from the liturgy, obligatory. Messallians and Monophysites were rejected. In particular, mystics who spread monophysite views were excommunicated and new decisions were taken to regulate monastic life.[393] Despite all this, the Patriarch did not make a good impression in the Eastern Church, became involved in corruption and died in 609. Khusrev II placed all his property in the state treasury and forbade the election of a new patriarch for the Eastern Church. The Eastern Church remained headless for twenty years until the death of the ruler (628).[394] This situation created a period of conquest for the Church.

2.9.3. Fetret Period and Great Mar Babai (551-628)

After Catholicos Sabrisho, the Eastern Church entered a period of conquest and tried to cope with two important problems. The first was the schism within the church caused by Henana of Erbilli. The second was the strengthening of the Monophysites, who took advantage of the fact that the Eastern Church was deprived of political support in the eyes of the Sassanid government and was not allowed to elect a new patriarch, and they made progress in establishing their own church hierarchy in Sassanid lands. In this regard, the name of Gabriel of Sinjar, who was particularly influential in the Sassanid court, stands out. Gabriel, who was a doctor in the palace, converted to the monophysite sect and married the ruler's wife Shirin.

together they supported the Monophysites against the Nestorians. They also supported the ruler

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[392] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 60; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 361-362; Abona, *Tārihu "l- Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/171-172.

[393] *Synodicon Orientale,* 471-479; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/172.
[394] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbâru Betârike*, 61; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 363; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/173.

and prevented the election of a new patriarch. During the wars between the Sassanids and Rome, a significant part of the regions where the Monophysites lived densely were captured by the Sassanids. This situation was effective in the Sassanids' prioritization of Monophysite Christians. The Nestorians fell out of favor and the Monophysites came to the forefront. However, members of the Eastern Church made various attempts to obtain permission from the ruler to elect a patriarch. At this point, a priest named Gewargis played an important role. After long efforts, he convinced the ruler to elect a new patriarch. However, under the influence of Gabriel and Shirin of Sinjar, he stipulated that in order for this request to be realized, a meeting should be held to demonstrate the soundness of their beliefs in the face of various questions that the Monophysites and Henanites wanted to be answered. In this context, a delegation from the Eastern Church was formed to answer these questions, consisting of Yonadab, the metropolitan of Hadyab (Erbil), Shubhalmaran, the metropolitan of Beth Germay (Kirkuk), Isho'yab II, the bishop of Balad, the future patriarch, Henanisho the priest, Sargis, the bishop of Kesker, Gabriyel, the bishop of Nahirgul, and Gewargis, the aforementioned Gewargis on behalf of the Mar Abraham Monastery on Mount Izala. According to the chronicles of the Eastern Church, in the meeting that took place in 612 at the Sassanid palace, the representatives of the Eastern Church prevailed and presented the orthodox faith. Gewargis and Henanisho wrote a statement of faith, which would later become the basic creedal text for the Eastern Church, and in this text, for the first time, the "two-headed (knoma/hypostasis)" Christology was formalized. However, despite all this, the ruler did not authorize the election of a patriarch.[395] Some documents of this debate and the statement of faith presented by the Eastern Church to the ruler have survived.[396] These minutes consist o f three parts: the statement of faith, the conclusion of the debate and the answers to the ruler's questions.

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[395] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 366, 373-375; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/176-180.
[396] *Synodicon Orientale,* 580-597, 625-634; Braun, *Das Bush der Synhados*, 322-330; Ignazio Guidi, "Chronicom Anonymum", *Chronica Minora I*", *CSCO 1-2* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1903), 12-21.

The statement of faith consists of an introduction, a statement of faith, a conclusion and a request to the sovereign for permission to elect a catholicos.[397] They were asked the following questions: What is the faith preached by the Apostles? Is Mary the mother of God or the mother of man? Did anyone before Nestorius say that Jesus had two natures and two persons? The delegation of the Eastern Church defended their position on these and other questions by bringing evidence from Athanasius (d. 373), John of the Golden Mouth (d. 407), and even Cyril himself (d. 444) within the framework of the diophysite Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Although the statement of faith stated that the Church of the East was also the official Persian Church and that they had acted with the Persians in the Roman-Sassanid wars, they did not receive a favorable response from the ruler. They soon despaired when Gewargis was murdered by order of the ruler.[398] During this period of fetatus (609-628), when no patriarch was allowed to be elected, the Eastern Church was ruled by Mar Aba, archdeacon of the Church of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, and Babai the Great, who was appointed as superintendent over the monasteries, especially in northern Mesopotamia.[399] During this time, the Monophysites (Jacobites) took the Monastery of Mar Matta near Mosul as their headquarters and began to organize from there throughout the Sassanid territories. The Jacobites, especially Mar Petiyon and Mar Matta Monastery, took many monasteries from the Nestorians by force.[400] In order to defend their position in this region, the Nestorians opened new schools and tried to introduce new regulations to the monasteries.

Mar Babai the Great (551-628) is known as one of the most important theologians of the Eastern Church. During the period when the Church lacked a patriarch, he was entrusted with the task of preserving the integrity of the Eastern Church and defending it against theological attacks.

undertook the task. In Beth "Aynatha" near Beth Zabdayi (Sirnak-Idil), a wealthy

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[397] Geevarghese Chediath, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great* (Kottoyam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, 1982), 31.
[398] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/179-180
[399] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/183.
[400] Sher, *Nusaybin Academy*, 79 Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/175-176.

He was born into a family and studied medicine and theology at the Nusaybin School under Abraham Beth Rabban. He later became a monk at the Great Monastery founded in 571 by Abraham of Kashkar (d.588) on Mount Izla near Nusaybin. He then returned to his hometown and founded a monastery there. After Abraham of Kashkar, he became the ruler of the Great Monastery upon the death of Dadisho (603/4). During his rule, many of the monks who could not adapt to his reforms left the monastery and founded new monasteries. Since the School of Nusaybin was under the Henanite rule, the Great Monastery became a base for the defense of Theodorian Christology from early on. Dadisho" stipulated that monastic education should adhere to the views of Theodoret of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius and their followers. The works of Nestorius, translated into Syriac, were first read here and began to be used as educational material. In this respect, it was precisely during this period that the Eastern Church became acquainted with Nestorius. During this period, various problems and theological disputes were going on in the monasteries of the Eastern Church. Therefore, when he was appointed as an inspector over the monasteries of Northern Mesopotamia during the Fetret period, only the metropolitans of Beth "Arbaya (Nusaybin Diocese), Hadyab (Erbil) and Beth Germay (Kirkuk) consented to his inspection and supervision. The Church was plagued by the problems of the Messallians, the adherents of Henana and the Monophysites, who took advantage of the situation of the Eastern Church to increase their activity. However, Mar Babai, as a skilled administrator and monastic leader, tried to protect the Eastern Church from internal and external attacks. He fought against the Monophysites and the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon with his writings and ensured that the views and interpretations of Theodore of Mopsuestia became more permanent. For this purpose, he wrote 83 works, few of which have survived. His most important work is *Unity*.

on the theology of the Eastern Church. It is one of the most fundamental works on the theology of the Church of the East and is still relevant today.[401]

During this time, a fierce war between the Sassanids and Byzantium had been going on since 602. In a short period of time, the Sassanid army conquered Anatolia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Libya, and thus all the regions where Monophysites lived came under Sassanid rule. The Byzantine administration's harsh attitude towards the Monophysites facilitated the Sassanids. The churches, which had long been ruled by bishops favoring the Council of Chalcedon and using the liturgy of the Council of Chalcedon, fell into the hands of the Monophysites. Having suffered a heavy defeat against the Sassanids, the Byzantine Emperor Phocas (610) was deposed and replaced by Heraclius (610-641). Heraclius, who launched an offensive against the Sassanids in great cooperation with the Church, reclaimed all the lost territories between 622 and 627, added the Sassanid territories of Mosul, Erbil and Kirkuk to his territory and approached the Sassanid capital Seleucia. The Sassanids suffered a major defeat and Hosrev II was killed in the ensuing chaos. In fact, this long war weakened both states in terms of economy and human resources and this situation facilitated the work of the Islamic armies that would emerge shortly afterwards. The Sassanid Empire lived in great chaos between 628-642. Twelve rulers took the throne in fourteen years. The children of Shirin and Maryam, who were Christians, of Khusraw II, fought for the throne. Although Merdanshah, the son of Shirin, was nominated as the heir apparent, he was killed with the help of Maryam's son Shirawayh and some commanders. It is reported that Shirawayh, who succeeded to the throne, was a Christian. It was during Shirawayh's rule that the Eastern Church received permission to elect a new patriarch.[402] The bishops wanted Mar Babai the Great to be the patriarch, but he refused.

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[401] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 178-182; Chediath, *The Christology of Mar Babai,* 4-40, 53-55.
[402] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/184-190; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 376- 378, 384-386; Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 401-404.

He did not. Iso "yab Jidali II (628-646) was elected patriarch. Born in the village of Jidala near Sinjar, the new patriarch was educated at the Nusaybin School during the Henana period. It is reported that he married in his youth. He was one of the students who left the school during the Henana period in protest against his teachers when the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia were removed from the curriculum. He later came to Balad (Old Mosul) where he became a teacher and then a bishop. When permission was given to elect a new patriarch, the bishops first wanted Mar Babai to be the catholicos, but he refused, so Isho'yab II (628-645) became the catholicos.[403] After becoming the Catholicos, he accelerated his efforts to restore church order. In this context, he opened the closed schools, added new ones and appointed new bishops.[404] In the meantime, the Sassanids were still fighting for the throne. Hosrev II's daughter Boran sent a delegation headed by Isho'yab II to Heraclius in Aleppo in 630 to arrange a final peace treaty with Byzantium. According to the Chronicles, during her embassy she had discussions with the emperor on the doctrine of the faith and he found her explanations orthodox.[405] While there, he administered communion and the emperor and the Byzantine bishops received communion from him. He agreed that the names of Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius would not be read during the service in exchange for Cyril's name not being mentioned during communion. However, when the catholicos returned, his failure to read the names of the "Three Bright Lights" of the Eastern Church caused a great outcry. Some bishops accused him of betraying the orthodox faith. There w a s a dispute between him and Barsauma, the bishop of Susa, over various letters.[406] He sent a letter to Abraham of Beth Madayeli about Christology.

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[403] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/189-191; Mari b. Süleyman, *Ahbâru Betârike*, 61; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 386-387; Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 3-5.
[404] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 7.
[405] The Arabic text of the statement of faith has survived. See Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fatārika*, 55.
[406] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 389-404; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/192-193.

a very important letter has survived.[407] During the reign of Isho "yab II, missionaries were sent to China in 635.[408]

In 629, the Byzantine emperor Heraclius again made the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon obligatory. However, when he realized how important the Monophysites were for the protection of the eastern borders of the state, he made various attempts to win them back and ensure church unity in the country, but he could not get any results.[409] Taking advantage of the Byzantine takeover of the western regions of Sassanids and the throne fights in the Sassanid administration during this period, the Monophysites (Jacobites) started to mobilize again. Five Jacobite bishops in the Sasanian region contacted Athanasius Gamolo (d. 631), the Jacobite patriarch of Antioch, and asked him to appoint a metropolitan for the eastern region. The patriarch initially rejected this request, fearing that this diocese might become independent in the future. However, it was decided that the Monastery of Mar Matta would be the metropolitan center. However, Tikrit soon became the eastern metropolitanate of the Monophysite (Jacobite) Church and these metropolitans were later called "Muferriyan". Marutha became the first metropolitan of Tikrit.[410] By this period, the Sassanid Empire was in the process of disintegration and was soon destroyed by the Muslims.

2.9.4. Fall of the Sassanids

Towards the end of the Sassanids, Christianity had the opportunity to spread over a wide geographical area. Although the Assyrian/Aramaic people were the dominant element within the Eastern Church, it spread among many ethnic groups in the Sassanid geography and Central Asia. Chronicles, synod minutes, hagiographies (stories of the saints) and martyrologies reveal that there were many members of various ethnic groups who served at all levels of the Church.

[407] This letter was translated and published by Lois Sako, first in French and then in Arabic under the title "al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali, Hayatuhu wa Rusulatuhu "l-Lahutiyya".
[408] Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 79, 130-131.
[409] Emotion, *Christianity and Empire*, 405-408.
[410] Bar Habreus, *al-Târihu "l-Kenise*, 2/26-27; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 378-379; Albert Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 1/194-196.

many important personalities have taken up the subject. The discovery of Christian religious texts in many languages other than Syriac makes it clear that Syriac was not the only language of liturgy. The Eastern Church's ability to adapt sacred texts, liturgy and liturgy into the languages of other peoples seems to have been an important factor in the success of its missionary activities. Considering the Assyrian/Aramaic Christian population under Sassanid and Byzantine rule, it is accepted that they accounted for a significant portion of the world's Christian population until the VII century. In fact, some scholars have argued that their population was larger than that of the Greek, Latin and Coptic Christians.[411] At the time of the fall of the Sassanids, the hierarchy of the Eastern Church was organized in two-thirds of the cities it owned. It is estimated that there were ten metropolitans and ninety-six bishops during this period. The vast majority of these metropolitans were concentrated in the Tigris and Euphrates basin (Seleucia-Ktesiphon, Keshker (Basra), Nusaybin, Teredon, Erbil, Beth Germai). Various theological schools continued to exist in Seleucia, Deir Koni/Kunni (Qoni/Qunni), Erbil and Nusaybin. Churches were also established in many regions outside Sassanid territory. Nestorians became widespread among the Sassanid Arabs of Lahmi (Hira), while the Jacobites gained population among the Ghassanids. There was a significant Christian population in Yemen, Najran and the eastern coast of the Arabian peninsula. From the end of the Vth century, Christianization activities began among the Huns and Turkic tribes, the eastern neighbors of the Sassanids. There were Nestorian Christians in India (Malabar) and the first missionary group reached China in 635. During the reign of Isho'yab II, the regions of Hilwan, Herat (Afghanistan) and Samarkand (Uzbekistan) were made metropolitans.[412]

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[411] Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 54-55.
[412] Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 57-70; Albert Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 2/13-18, 58-62; Lois Sako, *Hulasetu Tarihi "l-Keniseti "l-Kildâniyye* (Kirkuk: 2006), 12-24; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 46-47; Vine, *The Nestorian Churches*, 56-70.

3. ISLAMIC PERIOD

The protracted war between the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanid Empire exhausted both sides, the regions where the war took place suffered great destruction and the inhabitants were adversely affected. After Islam emerged as a religion and the Arabian peninsula came under the control of the Muslims, military operations were launched against the Byzantine and Sassanid territories in the north from the time of the first caliph Abu Bakr (d. 634), and in a very short time, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia and Iran were taken under control. Due to the defeat of the Sassanid Empire against Byzantium a short time before, most of the Sassanid territories in the west had fallen into Byzantine hands. Therefore, the cities of Northern Mesopotamia in the Euphrates-Tigris basin, which were inhabited by members of the Eastern Church, were taken from Byzantium and the other regions came under Muslim rule with the elimination of the Sassanids (632-660). Syriac/Aramaic Christians generally remained neutral in the wars between the Muslim Arabs and the Sassanids. However, it is known that some Christian Arab tribes fought together with the Muslim Arabs against the Sassanids during the Islamic conquests.[413] The Eastern Church began to adapt to the new rule from the early period of the Islamic conquests.[414] When we look at the Eastern Christian sources that provide information about the early military activities of the Muslims, it is seen that the Monophysite (Jacobite) and Nestorians, except for the pro-Chalcedonian Christians, generally had a positive approach. Christian sources state that Christians did not face any oppression during these conquests, on the contrary, they were provided with security of life and property in return for jizya and were granted freedom of belief.[415] Name

[413] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/52.
[414] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 1/199.
[415] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "ş-Şarkiyye,* 2/53; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 406; for the reflections of the Islamic conquests among Nestorian and Monophysite Christians, see Zafer Duygu, "Zuknin Monastery Assyrian Chronicle (775) Specifically, the Issue of "Conversion" in Christians under Islamic Rule" *Milel ve Nihal* 10/2

Since the two churches had been oppressed by the Byzantine and Sassanid governments, they welcomed the new rulers' attitude towards them. As a matter of fact, while the Muslims made rapid progress in the regions inhabited by the Monophysites and Nestorians, they could not maintain the same success in Anatolia, a region under the Byzantine Empire church.[416] Faced with the rapid advance of the Muslim Arabs and the process of taking the region under their control, Nestorian and Monophysite Christians did not realize at first that they were facing a new religion. Rather than referring to a new religion with the name "Islam", the chronicles refer to an ethnic identity as "Arabs".[417] Therefore, when Christians first encountered Islam, they saw it as a political phenomenon rather than a religious challenge.[418] Since they thought that they were facing a temporary rule at this stage, they interpreted it as God's punishment for the mistakes that Christians had made, for which they should repent and strive to be good Christians.[419] John bar Penkaye, an important Nestorian historian of the late seventh century, describes the situation as follows:

> "We should not think of their (the Arabs') arrival as something ordinary, but as a divine operation. Before God called them, He had prepared them in advance to be reverent towards the Christians. They (the Arabs) had also been warned by God to show respect towards our ascetics (Ihidoye). Now, when they came and dominated the two kingdoms (Byzantium and Sassanids), not by any battle or warfare, as God had commanded, but in a commonplace way, such as rescuing a piece of burnt wood from the fire, and without the use of war or human weapons, God gave them victory in a way that fulfilled the words written about them: As it is written, "one man drove out a thousand, and two men drove out ten thousand." How else could naked men (Arabs), with their armor and shields

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(May-August 2013), 175-195; "The Christian Historiography of Islamic Conquests and Muslim Dominance in the VIIth Century*" Artuklu Akademi* 1/1 (2014), 47-55.

[416]Duygu, "Islamic Conquests in the VIIth Century", 50-51.

[417] George Jabra Al-Kopti, *Christianity and Islam, The Mutual Understanding and the Development of their Early Relations till the End of the Umayyad Islamic Rule in the Middle East, with Special Focus on the Identity Formation of Both Communities*" (Dunedin: University of Otago, Master's Thesis, 2018), 88, 101-102, 112.

[418] Sidney Griffith, "Answering the Call of the Minaret: Christian Apologetics in the World of Islam", in *Redefining Christian Identity: Cultural Interaction in the Middle East since the Rise of Islam* , ed. van J. J. Genkil et al, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 134 (Leuven, Belgium: Uitgeverij Peeters en De Partement Oosterse Studies, 2005), 92; Al-Kopti, *Christianity and Islam*, 114

[419] Duygu, "Islamic Conquests in the VIIth Century", 40-45.

> without which they could ride and be capable of victory apart from divine help? God had called them from the ends of the earth to destroy through them a "sinful kingdom" and through them to humble the proud spirits of the Persians."[420]

John bar Penkaye, speaking of the rule of the Umayyad Caliph Mu'awiya I (d. 680), says that he ruled over the lands of the Persians and Byzantines, allowed everyone to live as they wished (according to their religion), and charged jizya in return.[421] Isho'yab III (d. 659), one of the first Nestorian patriarchs in early Islamic history, makes similar assessments. According to him, the God-given Arabs were very respectful towards Christianity and Christian clergy and protected churches and monasteries.[422] Dionysius of Tel Mahra (d. 842), to cite an example from the Jacobite (Monophysite) historians, makes similar remarks, saying that because of the crimes committed by the Romans against our church and our community, God sent the lowest people in the world (the Arabs) against them and we were saved in exchange for the jizya. He goes on to say that this deliverance was a great gain for them against the persecutions of Byzantium.[423] Christian literature written under early Islamic rule does not report any persecution of Christians to convert to Islam, but instead invites Christians to repent of this "barbarian attack" and to live the true Christian faith.[424]

Christians have had a legal status since the beginning of Islamic rule. Accordingly, Christians, Jews, Magi, etc. living under Islamic rule were recognized as dhimmis and their freedom of life, property and belief were guaranteed in return for the dhimmitude treaty. In return, they were required to pay a personal tax (jizya), land tax (kharaj) and a kind of trade tax (uşûr).

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[420] John bar Penkaye, *Ktobo d-Rish Mele (687 AD*, trans. Zafer Duygu, in *STYGA*, 125.
[421] John bar Penkaye, *Ktobo d-Rish Mele,* 129-130.
[422] Rubens Duval, *Isho "yahb III, Liber epistularum*, CSCO 11-12 (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1904-1905), 121.
[423] *History of Dionysios of Tel Mahreli (842 AD)*, trans. Zafer Duygu, in *STYGA*, 419-420.
[424] Al-Kopti, *Christianity and Islam*, 113.

The Patriarchs were recognized as their religious and secular representatives. Patriarchs were recognized as their religious and secular representatives, and they were given the right to resolve legal disputes between them in their own courts, as well as to bring them to Islamic courts. It is important to keep in mind that despite the various practices from the Umayyad period onwards to restrict some of the religious and social activities of non-Muslims, Islamic rule provided a significant degree of freedom of belief.[425] Indeed, the satisfaction brought about by this freedom of belief is reflected in early Christian literature. However, after a short period of time, when it was realized that the Muslim Arab rule was not temporary and that their religion (Islam), like Christianity, was a religion that attached importance to gaining new adherents, their perspectives towards Islam and the new government began to change. Christianity had been in a constant state of development until then. Towards the end of the Sassanid period, the Christian population had increased considerably and the conversion of the Sassanid State to Christianity was almost realized. However, with the emergence of Islam, the spread of Christianity began to halt and decline. In a short period of time, Islam began to spread among Assyrian/Aramaic Christians, especially among Christian Arabs. This was an unusual situation for Christians, who were accustomed to constantly gaining new converts. As a matter of fact, Eastern Christian sources clearly emphasize the astonishment and sadness at the voluntary conversion of Christians without any coercion or pressure. Patriarch of the Eastern Church

Isho "yab III (d. 659) lamented that there were very few clergymen left in the region, especially in the coastal Arab region, due to Christians converting to Islam without any coercion.[426] Although under Muslim Arab rule, Christians converted to Islam due to various factors, such as the various restrictions imposed due to dhimmi status, heavy taxes, or to obtain status in the eyes of the state

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[425] Ahmet Özel, "Non-Muslim", *DIA* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 1996), 13/418-427.
[426] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/66.

[427] but it is not possible to explain this phenomenon by these alone. It is more in line with the facts to attribute this new phenomenon mainly to the attraction of the new religion.[428] With the increase in conversions from Christianity to Islam and the realization that the new rule was permanent, Christian clerics began to see Islam as a rival religion. At this stage, Christian apocalyptic (texts depicting the Arabs as a sign of the apocalypse) and hagiography literature became widespread, and the focus was on preserving the status quo by trying to keep the hope of salvation alive.[429] However, since they had not yet engaged in an intellectual struggle with Muslims, Christians continued to write in their own language until the end of the Umayyad period. After this period, they started to use the Arabic language to make their own religious defense against the Muslims. During the late Umayyad period and the early Abbasid period, Muslims and Christians began to establish closer relations, which provided the opportunity to get to know each other better. Since the first intellectual debates between the two sides took place in Damascus, the seat of the Umayyads, it was mainly the Jacobite and Melkite Christians who participated in these debates.[430] After the center of government moved to Baghdad during the Abbasid period, the Nestorian Church began to participate heavily in these debates. On the one hand, they began to formulate new church laws, and on the other hand, they began to defend the teachings of Christianity through apologies and refutations. Indeed, the most violent reaction to the defense of Christian theology and the intellectual rejection of Islamic teachings can be found in the tradition of apology and refutation developed in the early Abbasid dynasty.

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[427] Despite the increase in the number of Muslims among Christians, especially in the Abbasid-Byzantine borders, Eastern Christians remained a demographically large population and constituted the majority in many settlements. Duygu, "Zuknin Monastery", 197-198.

[428] Zafer Duygu, *Assyrians in Islamic Administration (VII-XII. Centuries)* (Manisa: Celal Bayar University, SBE, History Department, Master's Thesis, 2010), 66-68.

[429] Al-Kopti, *Christianity and Islam*, 138-139; Duygu, "Islamic Conquests in the VIIth Century", 56-58; "Zuknin Monastery", 180; Sidney H. Griffith, "The Prophet Muhammad, his Scripture and his Message, according to the Christian apologies in Arabic and Syriac from the first Abbasid Century", *Arabic Christianity in the Monasteries of Ninth-Century Palestine, Variorum Collected Studies Series*, *CS380* (London: 1992), 109-110.

[430] Al-Kopti, *Christianity and Islam*, 140-144.

emerges. However, it must be acknowledged that this process posed various difficulties for Christians under Muslim rule. For the Christians, these debates were shaped by their loss of power due to conversions to Islam and the need to respond to the criticisms of shirk directed against them by Muslims.[431]

3.1. The Eastern Church in Early Islamic History

When the Muslim Arabs conquered Seleucia (Medain), the capital of the Sassanids and the patriarchal seat of the Eastern Church, Isho'yab II was serving as patriarch (642). In the chronicles of the Eastern Church, it is reported that the patriarch corresponded with the Prophet Muhammad and the Khulafa-i Rashidin and received various emannas during this period, and copies of these emannas are quoted.[432] However, it is known that these documents do not have a historical character.[433] There is no information about this correspondence with the patriarch in Islamic sources. The patriarch remained in Medain until the time when the gate of Medain was dismantled and transferred to Kufa, after which he retired to Kerha in the Beth Germai (Kirkuk) region, where he remained for the rest of his life. He traveled to Nusaybin to put an end to the dispute between the metropolitan of Nusaybin, Kuryakos (Quryakos) and the people of Nusaybin, but the metropolitan died in the process. The patriarch then consecrated a new bishop and appointed him as the metropolitan of Nusaybin, but the people of Nusaybin did not accept him. The patriarch returned to Kirkuk and died of grief and travel fatigue.[434] During this period, the church struggled with various problems within the church. Education at the Nusaybin School, which was still under the control of teachers who shared Henana's views, suffered from a serious division among the students and many of them left.

[431] Duygu, "Zuknin Monastery", 178-180.
[432] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 62; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 422-433, 435-437; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*,54-55.
[433] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/55. Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 42; Sako, *al-Batrirk Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 13.
[434] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/54; Sako, *al-Batrirk Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 14-15.

the Council of Chalcedon. Many of Henana's disciples and successors who adhered to the views of the Council of Chalcedon still serve in churches and monasteries and struggle with the diophysite views of the Eastern Church. This shows that the pro-Chalcedonian views had a significant following within the Eastern Church. This pro-Chalcedonian vein will continue to exist for a long time to come. Due to the disputes that arose in the Monastery of Mar Abraham on Mount Izla near Nusaybin, the clergy was also divided and some of them left the monastery. In this monastery led by Babai the Great, some of the monks who did not agree with his harsh methods of asceticism left. One of them, Jacob of Lashom, founded the "Abe Monastery" near Akre (Dohuk). In the years to come, this monastery would become an important center in terms of training many patriarchs and many missionary monks. Another problem was the Sahdona issue. Born in Helmun in the Beth Nuhadra region[435] at the end of the VI century, Sahdona and Isho'yab III, who would later become patriarch, studied together at the Nusaybin School under Henana, stayed for a while at Beth "Abe Monastery, and later served as bishop in the Kirkuk region (635-640). He wrote one of the most important works on the monastic life of the Eastern Church, *The Book of Perfection*. He adopted the views of the Council of Chalcedon on Christology and argued that there was only one uknum (knoma/hypostasis) in the incarnate Christ instead of two. At the 643 synod, it is reported that his views were rejected and he was exiled to Urfa. His views were rejected again under Patriarch Marameh (646-649) and Patriarch Isho'yab III (649-659).[436] After Isho'yab II, Marameh was elected as patriarch. He was from Erzen and was educated at the Nusaybin School. It is reported that he was loved by the Muslims for opening the gates of the castle to the Islamic armies while he was bishop in Mosul.

[435] Helmon is thought to be the village of Elemun (Andic) in the Beytüşebap district of Şırnak.
[436] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/63-64; *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 249-255; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 133; "Sahdona (Martyrius)", *GEDSH*, 356.

During the period, students were required to wear a sash to distinguish themselves from others.[437]

3.1.1. Catholicos Isho "yab III (649-659)

Isho "yab III, the most active patriarch of the Eastern Church in the early Islamic period, was born near Erbil and educated at the Nusaybin School during the Henana period. Early on, he fought against the Henana together with Grigor, the bishop of Nusaybin, and was later appointed bishop of Nineveh. While serving in this position, he was part of the delegation sent to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius with Isho'yab II. He was then appointed metropolitan of Erbil and was elected as patriarch after the death of Patriarch Marameh. During his patriarchate, he struggled with the Monophysites who tried to spread their activities in the Nestorian regions and the pro-Cochalcedonian views that spread within the Eastern Church under the leadership of Sahdona. In this regard, he made great efforts to prevent Sahdona's pro-Chalcedonian views from gathering supporters within the Eastern Church. He remained loyal to the diophysite views of the Nestorian Church and the interpretations of Theodore of Mopsuestia. One of the major problems he faced early in his patriarchate was that almost all the Christians on the Arabian coast of Oman, Bahrain and Qatar were Muslims. He struggled hard to keep them in Christianity, but without success. Another important problem was that the bishops in the Fars region did not accept his patriarchate. Many of his correspondences with Shem "un, Metropolitan of Beth Ardeshir, have survived to this day. In one of his letters, he states that the Arabs respected the religion of the Christians, their saints, clergy, monasteries and churches and helped them.[438] Nevertheless, towards the end of his life, he was reportedly mistreated by the governor of Medain. He was therefore sent to Beth " Abe Monastery".

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[437] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 62; Shar, *Nusaybin Academy*, 85; *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 441-442.
[438] Duval, *Isho "yahb III*, 121.

was established.[439] The most important act of Isho "yab III was the editing of the Book of Hudra (Prayer and Liturgy), which is still used in the Church today. He divided the prayers and rosaries (liturgy) into chapters and weeks to be recited at services throughout the year. He abolished many of the anaphora in use and limited them to the Apostle Adday and the three anaphora still in use today, namely Mari, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius. He also compiled liturgical texts on the blessing of water called Taksha, the consecration of the altar, and the rite of baptism.[440] He has a large collection of 106 letters. These letters cover the Islamic period and beyond.[441] Isho "yab III reorganized the charter of the Nusaybin School. In addition to religious sciences, philosophy, medicine, logic and music were also taught.[442] However, due to the divisions in the Nusaybin School caused by Henana of Erbilli, schools were opened in different places within the Eastern Church, and the Nusaybin School began to decline.[443] On the other hand, in the VI and VII centuries, the monasteries within the Eastern Church made significant progress. In this respect, it is important to understand monastic life in the Eastern Church and its impact on the Church.

3.1.2. Monastic life in the Eastern Church

The Eastern Church uses the terms daira, umra and hirtha for monasteries and dairaye, umraye, hirtha, inwaye and ahhe for monks. The terms ihidaye (ascetic), madrabaye (desert dweller), hwiese (ascetic), awiele (guide), nukhraithe (ascetic), isthonaye (pillars) are also used for monks. For monastic leaders, names such as resh daira, resh umra, rabba, rabban, abba and mshablana are used.

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[439] Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ*, trans. Albert Abona (Baghdad: Matbaat Diyana, 1990), 46-47, 70-74; Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 62-63; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 56-57; Abona, *Tārihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/65-67; *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 260-262, Sher, *Nusaybin Academy*, 93, 187, Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 43-44; Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 13 (New Jersey: The Darwin Press, 1997), 175-182.
[440] For the works of Isho "yab III, see Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 257-262.
[441] Duval, *Isho "yahb III.*
[442] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 43.
[443] Sher, *Nusaybin Academy*, 98.

is used.[444] We have already mentioned the existence of a peculiar asceticism and asceticism independent of the monastic life that developed in Egypt after the spread of Christianity among the Assyrians/Aramites in the eastern regions. Within the Eastern Church, both Afrahat's *Proofs* and the *Book of Steps*, which was apparently written around the Zap River in the early V century and whose author is unknown, are known as important works on spiritual discipline and spiritual life in the early period of the Eastern Church.[445] From the Council of Mar Isaac onwards, a series of synod decisions were taken regarding the wandering monks and hermits, called Messallians, who were alleged to have corrupted the priesthood, and an attempt was made to direct them to a priesthood as prescribed by the Church. There are various opinions as to when the Egyptian monasticism, or more precisely the monasticism in accordance with church doctrine, was established and became widespread. The literature of the Eastern Church mentions a legendary Egyptian monk named Mar Avgen, who first settled in Tur Abidin, founded the first monastery and spread monasticism in the east through his disciples.[446] However, authors such as Theodoret of Cyrus, Sazomen, Mar Babai the Great and Toma al-Merci do not mention him at all in their works on monastic history. It is assumed that Mar Avgen did not live in the geography of the Eastern Church, but in western Syria.[447] In the Chronicles, Mar Abda's name is given for the first monastery founded in Southern Mesopotamia.

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[444] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East* (Trichur: Mar Narsai Press, 1978), 104-105.
[445] Robert A. Kitchen - Parmentier M. Franciscus, *The Book of Steps: the Syriac Liber Graduum* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2004).
[446] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 8; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*,9; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 74; Bedjan, *AMS*, 3/376-480; Labourt, *Le Christianisme*", 302-305; Fiey, *Jalons*, 100-112. It is also claimed that the first monasteries in the region were founded on Mount Maklub near Mosul by Greek priests and monks expelled by the Roman Emperor Valens (364-378). See Jean Maurice Fiey, *al- Kenisetu "s-Suriâniyyeti "sh-Sharqiyya*, trans. Kemil Hushayme al-Yessui (Beirut: Dar al-Mashrik, 1990), 10.
[447] For Mar Awgen's life story, see Paul Bedjan, *AMS*, 3/376-480. Also, Isho'dinah of Basra (IXth century) in his *"Kitab al-Iffe*" and Mari b. Sulayman and Amr b. Metta mention Mar Awgen. See Iso "dinah al-Basri, *Kitab al-Iffe*, transl. Paul Sheikho (Mosul: 1939), No. 1; Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 8; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 9. Edward G. Mathews, "Awgen, Mar", *GEDSH*, 48.

is mentioned. Mar Abda, who is assumed to have lived in the late IVth century and the first half of the Vth century, renovated Mar Mari's Deir Koni (Qoni/Qunni) and rebuilt it as a school and monastery. He trained many students, including the early patriarchs Mar Aha and Mar Yahballaha I.[448] It is known that during the early periods of Mar Efrem and Rabbula, various arrangements were made regarding monastic life and monks.[449] Toma al-Merci, who wrote an important work on the monasteries established within the Eastern Church and the lives of important ascetics living there, refers to Mar Abraham of Kashkeri (491-588) and the Great Monastery he founded on Mount Izla near Nusaybin as the first monastery established in the east.[450] Mar Abraham Kashkeri studied under Abraham Beth Rabban at the Nusaybin School, did mission work in Hire, and then traveled to Egypt where he became familiar with monastic life. Upon his return, he established his monastery on Mount Izla and spread the monastic organization within the Eastern Church in Persia through the students he trained.[451] Keshkeri established various rules for monastic life that monks had to follow and developed a different haircut for Nestorian monks to distinguish them from monophysite monks.[452] After him, his disciple Dadişo" (d. 604) took over the monastery,[453] compiled his teacher's canons on monastic life and made various additions himself. These canons regulated monastic life in accordance with the doctrine of the Eastern Church, tried to prevent the influence of Monophysites, and at the same time tried to regulate the spiritual life, which was thought to have been corrupted by the Messaliens. These laws applied to all monasteries within the Eastern Church.

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[448] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 31; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 25-26; Shar, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 277-278; Yusuf Habbi, *Kenisetu "l-Mashrik, al-Kildāniyya - al-Asuriyya*, (Lebanon: Mansurat al-Kulliyya "l-Lahuti "l-Hibriyya fi Jami "ati "r-Ruhe "l-Quds-Catholic, 2001), 82.
[449] Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya - al-Asuriyya*, 77.
[450] Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ*, 21-23; Labourt, *Le Christianisme,* 315-321.
[451] Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ*, 21-23; Labourt, *Le Christianisme,* 315-321. Jean Maurice Fiey, *al-Qaddisune "s-Surian* (Beirut: 2005) 12-14.
[452] Toma al-Marji, *Kitab al-Ruesa*, 23.
[453] Toma al-Marji, *Kitab al-Ruesa*, 23-24.

has been the basis. However, all the monasteries within the Eastern Church should not be considered as branches of this monastery. Because it was not possible to manage them all from a single hand, each monastery maintained its autonomy under the supervision of the diocese to which it belonged.[454] After Dadişo, Mar Babai the Great became the head of this monastery and during the period (608-628) when the Church was without a patriarch, he served as an inspector over the churches and monasteries and wrote his works on theology and spirituality here. He imposed harsh laws to prevent the corruption of the monasteries by the Messallians and to prevent laxity among the monks. As a result, some monks were forced to leave. One of them, Jacob of Lashom, founded the monastery of Beth Abe.[455] One of Abraham the Great's disciples was Bar Edta (d. 611/621) who, after leaving the Izla Monastery, founded an important monastery in 562 in the Marga region, known by his name.[456] From the VIth century until the Abbasid period, many monasteries were founded in Southern Mesopotamia and the Arabian coast, especially in Northern Mesopotamia on a line extending from Erzen to Nusaybin, Mosul, Erbil and Kirkuk. During this period, the locations of 150 Eastern Church monasteries have been identified, 142 within the Abbasid borders and 8 outside the Abbasid borders.[457] Among them are Mar Abraham, Dayr d "Qoni, Beth "Abe, Bar "Edta, Rabban Hormuzd, Mar Yako (Yaqo), Mar Mihail, Mar Elia and a few other important monasteries. During this period, a vast literature on the lives of monastery founders and monks was produced. Nesturi

[454] Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya - al-Asuriyya*, 78-79; Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 1/225-229

[455] Chediath, *The Christology of Mar Babai*, 6-13, 53-58. For the ascetics who left the Great Monastery under Mar Babai and the new monasteries they founded, see Toma al-Merci, *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ*, 24-46.

[456] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 164.

[457] For an extensive list of the monasteries of the East and the monasteries of the Church of the East in particular, see Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 44. For an extensive list of Eastern monasteries, and of Eastern Church monasteries in particular, see Benjamin Haddad, *Mawsu "etu "d-Diyarat*, 8 volumes (Dohuk: Licnetu "l-Adebiyya li Keniseti "l-Mashriqi "l-Assyria, 2015); Jean Maurice Fiey, *Ashur al-Masihiyya, Isham fi Dirasati "t-Tarihi wa "l-Jografiyyeti "l-Kenisiyyeti wa "r-Ruhbaniyyeti fi Shimali "l-Iraq*, 3 volumes, trans. Nafi" Tosa, (Baghdad: Menşurat Majellat al Fikru "l-Mesihi, 2013); Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya*
- al-Asuriyya, 79-112.

From the VI century onwards, monasteries came to the fore as important centers for training and training monks for missionary work. In particular, the monastery of Beth "Abe became for a long time a base for training missionaries and bishops sent to Central Asia and China, as well as a center of academic life where the biographies and sayings of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian monastic fathers were collected.[458] During this period, Ibrahim of Natpar, who lived in the second half of the VI century, wrote many monastic works. Mar Babai (d. 628) also laid down laws on monastic life and wrote many works in this field. The writing of works on hermit life and spiritual discipline in Nestorian monasteries continued in the following periods and many important personalities emerged.

3.2. Umayyad Period (661-750)

After Isho "yab III, the metropolitan of Erbil Gewargis, the bishop of Nusaybin Gewargis, and the bishop of Euphrates Misan Gewargis, all three named Gewargis, competed to become patriarch. Among them, Metropolitan Gewargis I of Erbil (660-680) was elected patriarch. Born in Kifra near Kirkuk, Gewargis resided for a time in the Beth "Abe Monastery and later served as metropolitan of Erbil. During his patriarchate, he traveled throughout the diocese and tried to bring order to the church. In 676, he organized a synod with a small number of clergy on Dirin Island in Bahrain. One of the important decisions taken at this synod was the sixth resolution, which stated that judges from outside the church should not be consulted.[459] He died in Hira and was buried there.[460] After him,[461] although Hanişo I was elected as patriarch, Iso "yab, the bishop of Basra, and John Dasıni, the bishop of Nusaybin, also claimed the patriarchate together with the bishops who supported them. Of these, Iso "yab w a s elected as the

patriarch of I.

[458] Fiey, *al-Kenisetu "s-Suriâniyyat al-Sharqiyya*, 10; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 44-45.
[459] *Synodicon Orientale,* 480-490; Hoyland, *Seeing Islam As Others Saw It*, 192-194.
[460] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 63; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārika*, 57; Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu'r-Ruesā*, 76-83; Abona, *Tarih'ül- Keniseti'ş- Şarkiyye,* 2/79-80.
[461] Only Amr has the information that John Bar Martha was a patriarch. See Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 57-58.

He renounced his claim to the patriarchate in favor of Henanisho, but John Dassini made attempts before the Umayyad ruler Abdulmalik b. Marwan to have himself made patriarch. The new patriarch was not content with dismissing Hanicho I, but had him thrown off a cliff by his disciples, who were assigned to take him to the monastery. Henanisho I, who luckily did not die, was crippled by this incident until his death. After escaping from their hands, he took refuge in the monastery of Yonan near Mosul. John Dassini, on the other hand, after serving for a year, went into hiding for a while because he could not pay the Umayyads what he had promised and died. Henanisho I became patriarch again on this occasion, but he could not go to Medain for fear of Hajjaj b. Yusuf (d. 714) because of the actions of his predecessor.[462] During the reign of Hajjaj, the Umayyad governor of Kufa, the chair of Medain remained vacant for a long time. Only after his death was Sliba Zha (714-727/8) elected as patriarch. Mari b. Suleiman and Amr b. Metta report that he ruled the church well, while Toma al-Marji reports some of his tyrannies over the monastery of Beth "Abe.[463] After his death, the patriarchal chair remained vacant for a while and then Petiyon (731-740/1) and Mar Aba II (741-751) served as patriarchs.[464] It is understood that the chair of Medain was not actively used during the Umayyad period. This was due to the rivalries and factions among the bishops as well as the revolts and political unrest in Iraq and Hijaz in the early Umayyad period. Especially under governors such as Hajjaj b. Yusuf and Yusuf b. Umar al-Sakafi (d.743), the pulpit of Medina remained empty. Once the capital of the Sassanids, Medain lost its socio-political importance with the loss of its capital status. Already during the patriarchates of Isho "yab III and Mar Aba II.

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[462] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 63-65; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 58-60; Abona, *Tārih al-Kanisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/80-81; *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 273-274.
[463] Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ*, 95-96; Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbâru Betârike*, 65; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 61.
[464] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 66-67; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārika*, 61-63; Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/84-85.

They did not use it for a long time.[465] At the end of the Mar Aba period, a bishopric was established in Egypt.[466] The Monophysite (Jacobite) Church had close relations with the Umayyad rulers because of its proximity to Damascus, the capital of the Umayyads. The patriarchs of the Melkite (pro-Chalcedonian) Church, on the other hand, took refuge in Byzantium until 742 and their influence diminished.[467]

From the early Islamic conquests until the Umayyad period, many Nestorian centers of knowledge and culture continued to exist. The Nusaybin School, which was the most important educational institution of the Nestorians, lost its importance from the VIIth century onwards due to the rule of Henana and his friends, and many people who left it during the Henana period established various schools in Ktesiphon-Seleucia, Deir d-Qoni/Qunni, Hire, Balad (Old Mosul), Gundishapur[468] , Merv and Meyafarkin, and these schools showed a significant development.[469] Despite the turmoil in the patriarchal administration, important writers and works emerged from the different dioceses within the Eastern Church. One of the most important of these writers was Isaac of Nineveh. Born in Bahrain in the first half of the VIIth century, he was educated at the Monastery of Beth 'Abe and became bishop of Nineveh for a short period (622-623). He became a hermit on Mount Matut in the Khuzestan region. He then moved to the monastery of Rabban Shabur in Shuster, where he died. He wrote many works on monastic life and the wisdom tradition of the Eastern Church. His various writings have survived in two parts. The first part consists of eighty-two sermons. The second part consists of forty-two texts. The translations of these works into different languages

show how much

[465] Jean Maurice Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara fī Hilāfeti Beni 'Abbās* (Beirut: Dar al-Mashrik, 1990), 43-44.
[466] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 58.
[467] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/88.
[468] Of these, the School of Gundishapur was not founded by the Nestorian Church, but by the Sassanids. During the reign of the Sassanid ruler Anushirvan (531-678), Hellenic scholars expelled from Byzantium settled here and the Gundishapur School became an educational center where Greek, Syriac, Persian and Indian scholars gathered and important advances were made in philosophy and medical sciences. During the Abbasid period, the scholars of the Gundishapur School moved to Baghdad. For more information, see Heinz Herbert Schöffler, *Gundi-Shapur Academy, Aristotle on the Eastern Road*, trans. Sedat Umran - Vedii İlmen (Istanbul: YabaYayınları, 2008).
[469] Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya - al-Asuriyya*, 136-138; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 43.

in showing that he was influential.[470] John bar Penkaya was born in Fınık, near Cizre. He stayed in the monasteries of Kamul Mar Yuhannan and Mar Bassima in that region. Although he wrote many works, his history book *Ktābā d-Rish Melle* (Book of Main Events), which consists of fifteen books, is very important.[471] It is estimated that Yusuf Hazzaya was born into a Zoroastrian family in Hazza near Erbil. He was sold as a slave to a Christian in the Kardo region, where he converted to Christianity and lived in many monasteries in this region. Although many texts have been attributed to him, only various works about his life as a monk have survived.[472] Abraham bar Dashandad was born in the village of Beth Seyade near Erbil. He was the headmaster of the Bashush School and was a pupil of such notable figures as Timotheos I and Isho bar Nun. Although there are many works attributed to him, only one letter on spiritual life has survived.[473] John of Dalyata (John Saba) was an important monk who lived in the region of Cardo, and some of his works on the spiritual life, translated into Greek, have survived.[474] Babay Jabili was born near Tikrit and worked on church music. He founded many schools and trained students in Tikrit and Erbil.[475] At the request of Patriarch Gewargis I, "Enanişo translated the legends and sayings of the Egyptian priests (Paradise of the Fathers) into Syriac.[476] Another important writer was Dadisho" Beth Katraye (Qatraye). He was born in Bahrain and lived in the monastery of Rab Kinari. A commentary on the ascetic Isaiah's b o o k on asceticism, mentioned above

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[470] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 275-276; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 137-138; Sebastian P. Brock, "Ishaq of Nineveh", *GEDSH*, 213-214

[471] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 287-289; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 139.

[472] Abona, *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 294-299; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 145. He should not be confused with Yusuf Hazaya of Ahwaz, who lived in the 6th century and also served as a teacher at the Nusaybin School. This author, who wrote many works, wrote the first known work on Syriac/Aramaic grammar. He added nine punctuation and vocalization marks to the Syriac alphabet, and this style of writing became a distinctive feature of the works of the Eastern Church. Abona, *Edab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 144-146.

[473] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 285-286; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 145.

[474] Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 144.

[475] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 284; Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesā*, 125-130.

[476] Abona, *Edat al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya,* 264

There is a commentary on *The Paradise of the Fathers*, *On the Seven Weeks' Retreat*, and several shorter treatises.[477] Bishop Elia of Merv was an active writer of the period, and the *Chronicle of Khuzestan is* attributed to him.[478] Other important writers of this period include Gabriel Raquza of Nusaybin, Bar Sahdi, Mar Aba II, and Sham'un d-Taybuteh (Sham'un of Inayed), who was both an important physician and a monk.[479]

3.3. Abbasid Period (750-1258)

With the Abbasids coming to power, a new era began for the Eastern Church. During the Umayyad period, the Eastern Church patriarchate could not establish close relations with the government due to its distance from Damascus, the capital of the state. However, when the Abbasids established the city of Baghdad, which was very close to Ctesiphon-Seleucia (Medain) and made it the capital, close relations were established with the new administration and the patriarchal center was moved to Baghdad after a short period of time. The newly established administration needed knowledgeable and cultured people in administrative, financial and educational fields. The Eastern Church took advantage of this situation by employing its knowledgeable and cultured personnel in these fields. Nestorian scholars, fluent in Greek as well as Syriac, were experts in medicine, philosophy and astronomy. Since the capital of the new empire was located in a basin where the Eastern Church was strong, the Nestorians were in a more advantageous position than the Monophysites and Melkites. They would later use this position as a means of superiority over the Jacobites and Melkites.[480]

Mar Aba II served as patriarch during the foundation of the Abbasids. When he died in 752, there was a contest among the bishops for the patriarchal chair.

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[477] Abona, *Edat al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya,* 287.
[478] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 281; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 144.
[479] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 288-289.
[480] Fiey, *al-Kenisat al-Kenisat al-Suriâniyyat al-Sharqiyya*, 18-19; Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/105; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 64.

In a short time, these conflicts were reflected on the Abbasid rulers. Sorin, the bishop of Hulvan, and Jacob II, the metropolitan of Gundishapur, clashed for the patriarchal chair, and Sorin became patriarch in 754 with the support of the ruler of Medain. However, his rival James II complained to Abu'l-Abbas Abdullah al-Saffah (749-754) and stated that the bishops did not want him. As a result, Caliph Abdullah b. Seffah dismissed him and appointed Jacob II (753-773) as patriarch.[481] During the reign of Caliph Mansur (754-775), there were many Nestorians working in the administrative bureaucracy or in the palace. One of them, Sargis, the caliph's physician, as a supporter of the former patriarch Sorin, carried out various activities against Patriarch Jacob before the caliph, and for this reason the patriarch was imprisoned for a while. During this period (762), the city of Baghdad began to be established in the north of Seleucia (Medain), a short distance away. In 765, when Mansur fell ill, he was told about the Nestorian Jarjis b. Gabriel Buhtishu, a doctor in Gundishapur, and the caliph invited him to Baghdad. Thus, the Buhtishu family, who would work as doctors in the Abbasid palace for many years, started to settle in Baghdad. With the arrival of Jarjis in Baghdad, the influence of Nestorians began to increase day by day.[482] Jarjis brought his disciple Isa b. Shahlufa with him and after curing the caliph, he left his disciple in Baghdad as a doctor. This doctor caused great persecution to Patriarch Jacob and some other Nestorian bishops. When this doctor was dismissed, Ibrahim, also a Nestorian, took his place, and as a result of his activities, Patriarch Jacob was released from prison and served as patriarch until 773, when he died.[483] Caliph Mahdi (775-785), who succeeded Caliph Mansur, was very tolerant towards Christians. This period saw the beginning of translation activities from Greek, Syriac, Persian and Indian languages into Arabic.

period. In these activities, translators from the Eastern Church played a leading role.

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[481] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 67-70; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fatārika*, 63; Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 44-45.
[482] Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 49-53.
[483] Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 55-58; Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 67-70; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fatārika*, 63; Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/106.

They played a role. In addition to the clergy of the Nestorian Church, an important Nestorian class consisting of physicians, scribes and translators emerged and began to interfere in church affairs. Among them, a Nestorian doctor named Musa b. Israel, who was a relative of the caliph's wife Hayzeran and who was actually a pharmacist but became one of the caliph's private doctors, played for the Nestorians the role that Gabriel of Sinjar had played for the Monophysites in the Sassanid court. After the death of Patriarch Jacob I, he received permission from the caliph to elect a new patriarch to the vacant patriarchal chair. The young bishop of Lashom, Hanisho II, and the elderly monk of Beth Halla Monastery, Gewargis, vied for the patriarchate. Caliph Mahdi ordered the election of Hanisho II (775-779) as patriarch. However, this patriarch was poisoned to death in 779 by the Nestorian doctor Isa b. Shahlufa, who opposed him.[484] A synod was organized by Henanisho II in 775.[485] Shortly before his death, he sent a missionary delegation to China. In fact, his name is mentioned in the Syriac-Chinese inscription known as Si-ngan-Fou, dated 781, which describes the activities carried out there since 635.[486] He was succeeded as patriarch by Timotheos I, one of the most important patriarchs of the Eastern Church, who would serve under five Abbasid caliphs.

3.3.1. Catholicos Timotheos I (780-823)

Timotheos I was born in Hazza near Erbil and received his early education under his uncle Gewargis, bishop of Beth Bagash. He then continued his education at the School of Bashush* under Abraham bar Dashandad. Here he studied Greek and Arabic, as well as religious and other sciences with his friend Abu Nuh Anbari and "Isho bar Nun. Bishop of Beth Bagash after the death of his uncle

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[484] Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fatārika*, 64; Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 71, Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 68- 73.
[485] For Synod decisions, see *Synodicon Orientale,* 515-523, Braun, *Das Bush der Synhado*, 371-381.
[486] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 59; Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 291.
* Shush sub-district of Akre district of Dohuk.

was the first patriarch. After the poisoning death of Hanicho II, four patriarchal candidates emerged: Tuma, the bishop of Kesker, Efrem, the metropolitan of Gundishapur, Gewargis, who had also been a candidate in the previous election, and Timotheos, the bishop of Bagash. Dr. Musa b. Israel tried to have Gewargis elected as patriarch, but shortly afterwards Gewargis was found dead. After much wrangling, he was elected patriarch in 780 after Timotheos' friend Abu Nuh Anbari used his influence with the governor of Mosul and Timotheos bribed some of the participants. However, the opposing bishops organized a synod in Mosul under the leadership of Bishop Yusuf of Merv and excommunicated Timotheos. Later, Ephrem, the metropolitan of Gundishapur, organized a synod in Baghdad with thirteen bishops and excommunicated Timotheos again (781). Timotheos, in turn, excommunicated them with fifteen bishops. But Musa b. Israel (Isa Abu Quraysh) intervened and reconciled the parties. Accordingly, from now on, the right to call the bishops for the election of the patriarch would be vested in the metropolitan of Kashkar and the right to consecrate the new patriarch would be vested in the metropolitan of Gundushapur. Thus, Timotheos I was ceremonially consecrated by the metropolitan of Gundishapur and reappointed as patriarch.[487] After the unity within the Church was restored, Timotheos I organized a synod in 781/782 where important decisions were taken and at the same time the opposition against him was completely eliminated.[488] There are many works attributed to him. 59 of his letters have survived. Most of them begin with an address to a friend named Sergios. One of them belongs to a religious debate with the Caliph Mahdi.[489] There are also questions and answers on church affairs, marriage

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[487] Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fatārika*, 64-65; Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 71-72, Abona, *Tārihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/113-117; *Adab al-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 300-304; Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 73-76; Laurence E. Browne, *The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia: From the Time of Muhammad till the Fourteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933; repr., New York: Howard Fertig, 1967), 57.

[488] *Synodicon Orientale,* 599-608; Oscar Braun, "Briefe des Katholikos Timotheos I", *Orients Christianus*, 2 (1902), 1-33; *Orients Christianus*, 3 (1903), 1-15; "Zwei Synoden des Katholikos Timotheos I", *Orients Christianus*, 2 (Rome: 1902), 283-286.

[489] Lois Sako, *Hivârat Messiahiyya-Islâmiyya, Mukaranatu Lahutiyya bi "l-Arabiyya fi Asri "l-Hilafat al-Abbasi* (Kirkuk: 2009), 22-56. See.

and a collection of 99 canons on inheritance.[490] Timotheos' relations with the Abbasids were very important for the future of the Church.

3.3.1.1. Relations with the Abbasid Administration and the Perception of Nestorianism

Timotheos I served as patriarch for more than forty years under five Abbasid caliphs, Mahdi (775-785), Hadi (785-786), Harun al-Rashid (786-809), Amin (809-813) and Mamun (813-83), and was careful to maintain close relations with them. Therefore, the first of his activities was to move the patriarchal chair from Medain to Baghdad.[491] As briefly mentioned above, the first Abbasid relations with the Nestorians began through doctors and translators. Through them, the patriarch was able to establish good relations with the Abbasid court and soon gained the friendship of the caliphs. An interesting event about Timotheos I during the reign of Caliph Mahdi is quite remarkable in terms of showing both the positive image of Nestorians in the eyes of Muslims and the establishment of close relations with the patriarch. According to what is reported, Bishop Yusuf of Merv, who did not accept the election of Timotheos I as patriarch and opposed him, took advantage of the war between Byzantium and the Abbasids and prepared a forged letter to be sent to the Byzantine emperor with the signature of the patriarch in order to put Timotheos I in a difficult situation before the caliph. In the letter, it was aimed to accuse the patriarch of treason by using statements that Christians prayed day and night for the victory of Byzantium. When this forged letter was delivered to the caliph, he was very angry. However, the Nestorian doctor Musa Musa, who was with the caliph at the time, realized the caliph's anger.

b. Israel immediately intervened, explaining that the letter was a forgery and that the Byzantines

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Oscar Braun, *Timothei patriarchae I epistulae*, CSCO 74-75/Syr. 30-31 (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1914-1915), Letters 1-39.

[490] Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 147-148; Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/129-130; *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 305-308. For a Lantine translation of this collection, see Jerome Labourt, *De Timotheo I, Nestorianorum Patriarcha (728-823)* (Paris: Victor Lecoffre, 1904), 50-86.

[491] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/139; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 60.

He said that he hated them (Nestorians) more than the Jews. The caliph was surprised and wanted to know the truth. Later, when the caliph asked the patriarch: "What is the relationship between Byzantium and the Nestorians?", he replied: "According to the Byzantines, the Nestorians are hardly Christians. They are closer to the Arabs than to the Byzantines. The Byzantines see Mary as the Mother of God (Theotokos), we see her as the Mother of Christ (Christotokos). That is why they consider us close to you.[492] Thereupon the caliph's anger subsided and he began to establish good relations with the patriarch. Caliph Mahdi asked Timotheos I to translate Aristotle's *Topika* from Greek into Arabic and he translated it into Arabic upon the Caliph's request. His friendship with the Caliph grew further, and he participated in debates and conversations in his presence, expressing his thoughts on various issues.[493] In one of these debates with the Caliph, he stated that it was the Jacobites and Melkites who believed that God died or suffered in the body, and that they (the Nestorians) were the closest group to Islam among the Christian groups.[494] Abu Nuh Anbari, who was active in the palace during the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid, further improved his relations with the caliph with the support of Nestorians such as Gabriel Buhtishu', accompanied him on various expeditions and participated in debates. One day Harun Rashid said: "O Abu Nasari! Which religion is true in the sight of Allah?" the patriarch replied without hesitation: "Whose commandments and laws are in harmony with the acts of God's creation, that is the true religion." This reveals the patriarch's quick wit and understanding of the rules of diplomacy.[495] In their discussions with the Caliph, they discussed all issues in a very free atmosphere. In a question he was asked about the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad:

Although he did not recognize Muhammad as a prophet like Moses, he did not recognize him as a prophet

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[492] Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 74-75, Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 60.
[493] Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 75-76.
[494] Alphonse Mingana, *The Apology of Timothy the Patriarch Before the Caliph Mahdi*, Woodbrooke Studies, 2 (Cambridge: Heffer, 1928), 87-88.
[495] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/122-124.

that he deserved praise and that he walked in the path of the prophets, inviting them to the one God.[496]

Since the early Abbasid period, an image of the Nestorians as the closest Christian sect to Islam was formed. The formation of such an image for the Nestorians was influenced by various accusations made against them by other Christian churches other than the Nestorians. John al-Dimshki (d.749), one of the Christians living under Islamic rule, claimed that Islam was taught to the Prophet Muhammad by a monk named Bahira, and later apologists who repeated this claim began to portray the monk Bahira as an Arian, a Jew, or a Nestorian. Over time, churches other than the Nestorians, when they wanted to describe Islam as a heretical religion, described it as a religion founded by a Nestorian monk.[497] The association of Islam with Nestorianism is mainly due to the fact that Islam, which sees Jesus as a human being and prophet, and the Nestorian view of Christology, which places a special emphasis on the human nature in Jesus Christ, are considered in the same context. Other churches have simplified this and claimed that both sides were united in their understanding of Jesus Christ as a human being. Over time, Muslims, who became aware of the Nestorian Christological view, found themselves closer to the Nestorians than to the other churches, at least in their view of Mary not as the "Mother of God" but as the "Mother of Jesus the Man". The Nestorian Church tried to take advantage of this positive image among Muslims to the detriment of other Christian churches. As a matter of fact, due to the wars with Byzantium during this period, some unfavorable situations emerged regarding the Melkites and Jacobites living along the borders, but these negativities were not experienced by the Nestorians.[498]

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[496] Mingana, *The Apology of Timothy*, 61.
[497] Daniel J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: The Heresy of the Ishmaelites* (Leiden: 1972), 68-69; Hoyland, *Seeing Islam As Others Saw It*, 479.
[498] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 71-75; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fatārike*, 64-66; Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ*, 163-165; Fiey, *Ahwâlu Nasara*, 75-112, Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/113-128.

3.3.1.2. Church Management

During his patriarchate, Timotheos I carried out important activities related to church administration. During this period, he mainly focused on preserving the existing Christian population among Muslims by preventing conversions and recruiting new converts through missionary activities in areas outside Abbasid rule. He concentrated on training sufficient numbers of clergy, ensuring priestly discipline, and appointing capable bishops. It is clear from his letters that he was particularly interested in the training of clergy. He introduced new regulations regarding the determination of the duties of clergy, their education and training, their consecration and ordination. Accordingly, metropolitans would be appointed by the patriarchate. However, the consent of the patriarch would also be sought for bishops consecrated in their respective regions. Just as he demanded full obedience of the clergy to the patriarch, he also demanded full obedience of the faithful to the clergy. He did not hesitate to impose severe sanctions on those who showed laxity in the administration of the Church or adopted views contrary to the official teaching of the Church.[499] According to him, the unity of the Church and the unity of doctrine are interdependent. In this regard, he fought against those who went outside the doctrine of the Church and their views. He was careful to preserve the unique characteristics of each of Christ's divine and human natures. Although he pointed out that the reality and naturalness of the union in Christ was stronger and superior to the union of soul and body, he rejected the union of the two Persons. Therefore, he opposed the use of words such as God was born, died, suffered, or that His human nature permeated His divine nature. As he fought against the Messaliens, he also opposed those within the Nestorian Church who held pro-Chalcedonian views, such as Henana, Joseph Hazzaya, John Dalyata and Sahdona.[500] In a letter to a monk in the Mar Marun Monastery, he stated that the Nestorian Church had preserved the true faith since the time of the apostles, and that this church was under the rule of Christian rulers.

[499] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/132-134.
[500] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/133.

He pointed out that because of its absence, it was not subjected to any corruption under the direction of Christian emperors. According to him, the Eastern Church never deviated from the true faith both before and after Nestorius.[501] Here he states that the religious beliefs of the Melkites and Monophysites were added and subtracted by the Roman emperors, but the Nestorian faith did not deviate from the true faith because it was not under the rule of Christian rulers.

Another issue that Patriarch Timotheos emphasizes is the reflections of the centralization of the Islamic judicial organization, which showed a significant development during the Abbasid period, on the Nestorian Church. In order to systematize the judicial organization during the Abbasid period, the institution of qadiqudat (chief judgeship) was established for the first time and Imam Abū Yūsuf (d.798) was first appointed to this position. His work *Kitâbü "l-Haraj is* mainly about the financial resources of the state and tax law, but it also includes many legal issues concerning non-Muslims. He clarifies issues such as the treatment of the dhimmis, the jizya, the dress of the dhimmis, the status of churches, etc. It is possible to evaluate these works as attempts to meet the socio-economic needs of the Abbasid administration.[502] The legal regulations of the Abbasid administration regarding the judicial organization influenced the Nestorians and prompted them to make various legal regulations on the issues that the church administration and the Christian community needed in terms of transactions. During the reign of Hanisho II, a Persian work on civil law was written for the first time by the Persian metropolitan Iso "baht and later translated into Arabic.[503] In this context, the *Collection of Eastern Synods*, which includes the synods held by the Eastern Church from 410 to 775 and the decisions of these synods

[501] For this letter, see Labourt, *De Timotheo I*, 37-49; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 61.
[502] Cengiz Kallek, "Kitab al-Haraj", *DIA* (Ankara: TDV Publications, 2002), 26/101-103.
[503] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/135.

(*Synodicon Orientale*) was compiled during the reign of Timotheos I.[504] "Abdisho" bar Brikha reports that Timotheos I held two synods in 790 and 804. The text of the 790 synod is included in the *Synodicon Orientale*. However, it appears that this text was nothing more than an official announcement of the decisions of the synod held in 781 and was preserved in the format of a letter sent to Ephrem, the metropolitan of Gundishapur, in the same year. This synod contained resolutions aimed at settling disputes between the bishops. In this case, the *Synodicon Orientale* must have been compiled between 775-790.[505] In addition, its 99 canons, which are organized in the form of questions and answers on Christian law, include the topics of church government (1-17), marriage (18-45) and inheritance (46-99).[506] In the XIth century, Abdullah b. Tayyib made various additions to these canons and translated them into Arabic under the name *Fiqh al-Nasara*.[507] The legal arrangements made by Timotheos I regarding church administration and transactions were based on two needs. Firstly, it aimed to resolve the disputes that arose between the bishops within the church regarding administrative management within the church without reflecting on the political administration and its judicial organization. Secondly, it is to provide legal solutions that the Christian community needs in terms of transactions. Because if Christians resorted to Muslim administrators or judges to solve their administrative and judicial problems, it would weaken the church's influence over the community. For this reason, canons were enacted that explicitly prohibited resorting to foreign courts on the grounds that they could not resolve disputes within the church.[508] According to Islamic law, the patriarch was recognized as the religious and secular leader of his community, and most of the time the jizya and taxes were collected through him. In this respect, the highest authority officially responsible for the Nestorians under the Abbasids

[504] *Synodicon Orientale*, 13.
[505] *Synodicon Orientale,* 603-608; see also Braun, *Das Bush der Synhados*, 287-311 for the letter sent to Bishop Efram of Gundishapur.
[506] Labourt, *De Timotheo I*, 50-86.
[507] W. Hoenerbach and O. Spies, *Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib. Fiqh an-Naṣrānīya*, CSCO 161-162/Arab. 15-16 (Louvain: Imprimerie Orientaliste L. Durbecq, 1956-57).
[508] Labourt, *De Timotheo I*, 52, 57-58.

Taking advantage of the right of dhimmis to have their own autonomous courts in Islamic law, the patriarch tried to ensure that ecclesiastical law was recognized as the sole authority for the resolution of legal problems arising both in the administrative field within the church and in the daily life of the Christian community. In particular, in order to prevent the bishops from resorting to foreign courts for the resolution of problems, the metropolitans were granted a certain autonomy for episcopal appointments, provided that they were coordinated with the patriarchate. These canons regulated the election and position of the patriarch, the law of metropolitans and the obligations of bishops, the church court and the responsibilities of the Christian community.[509]

3.3.1.3. Missionary Activities

One of the areas that showed the most development during the patriarchate of Timotheos I was missionary activities. During his reign, missionary activities were carried out in two directions. The first is his efforts to establish a bishopric and church organization in the region of Monophysites in the Islamic geography and the second is his missionary activities in the eastern regions of the Islamic geography. During the Sassanid and Byzantine administrations, some churches were supported by the state while others were prosecuted. With Islamic rule, different churches with diophysite and monophysite views lived within the same political borders under the rule of a single political power. The Muslim government's equal distance to all these different churches allowed these groups to coexist and establish more dialog. However, despite this, it was very difficult for them to establish dialog among themselves. However, the simultaneous imprisonment of the Nestorian patriarch Jacob, the Jacobite patriarch Jarjis (785-790) and the Melkite patriarch of Antioch during the reign of Caliph Mansur allowed these three patriarchs to meet and get closer to each other. This led to the opening of a Nestorian Church in Tikrit, the territory of the Jacobites, and the opening of a Nestorian Church in Nusaybin.

[509] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/136.

Domtianos the Great Monastery was also returned to the Jacobites.[510] But despite all this, it is difficult to say that the different churches established good relations. They continued their struggle against each other. It is reported that a debate took place between Timotheos I and the Jacobite patriarch Cercis and that Timotheos I wrote a work containing this debate. This work has not survived.[511] In his correspondence, Timotheos I emphasizes the inaccuracy of considering the Nestorian Church as heretical. In particular, he quotes Gregory Nazianzus (d. 390), one of the early orthodox church fathers, and compares his views with their own, stating that they share the same view of the unity of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ. He believes that he can find a compromise with the Jacobites and Melkites, at least in the trinity, since they share a common view of one essence (ousia-essence) and three hypostases.[512] Under Muslim rule, the Nestorian Church began to establish bishoprics in areas where Monophysites were concentrated, such as Egypt, Jerusalem and Damascus.[513] One of the interesting events of this period was the attempt of a delegation led by the doctor Gabriel b. Buhtishu to search for the grave of Nestorius in Egypt in order to transfer his bones to the Kokhe Church. However, this attempt was fruitless as the grave could not be identified.[514]

Timotheos was the Nestorian patriarch who did the most to make the Nestorian monasteries functional for the training of more missionary monks. The monastery of Beth "Abe was particularly active as a missionary training base.[515] The missionary monks, fluent in Syriac, Greek, Arabic and Persian, were trained in the Bible, philosophy, theology and medicine. Thus, missionary monks were able to use the Bible and important liturgical and theological texts in their missionary activities.

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[510] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/137.
[511] Abona, *Al-Adab al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 305.
[512] Thomas Hurst, *The Syriac Letters of Timothy I (727-823): A Study in Christian-Muslim Controversy*, (Washington: The Catholic University of America, PhD Thesis, 1986), 109, 155.
[513] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 59, 62.
[514] Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 94.
[515] Tome al-Marji, *Kitab al-Ruesa*, 205-234

They were made ready to adapt to the language and culture of the society they were working in. During this period, missionary activities were especially emphasized in India, China, Turkestan, Yemen and around the Caspian Sea, and remarkable successes were achieved.[516] In his letter to a monk in the Monastery of Marun, Timotheos I stated that the Turkish kagan had converted to Christianity along with almost all his people and that the kagan had asked for the establishment of a metropolitanate.[517] In some of his other letters, he mentions the establishment of a bishopric for Tibet, many monks crossing the sea to spread Christianity in India and China, the death of the Chinese metropolitan, and his successful missionary activities in Turkestan, Mongolia and Tibet.[518] Toma al-Merci wrote about missionary activities during the reign of Timotheos I. He mentions the successes of the missionary activities carried out by some eighty priests among the pagans in the regions of Deylem and Gilan south of the Caspian Sea and further east among the primitive peoples, and the activities of the bishoprics established in these regions.[519] As a result, it was during this period that the Eastern Church reached its largest frontiers up to that time. Under Timotheos I, the Eastern Church had a large ecclesiastical organization consisting of 27 metropolitans and 230 bishoprics. It is understood that the administration of the Nestorian patriarch in this period was wider than that of the Pope.[520] Another important development of the period was the translation activities carried out by the Nestorian Church within Bethlehem.

3.3.2. Bethlehem and Translation Activities

During the Abbasid period, with the shift of the caliphate's administrative center to Iraq, where Nestorians were concentrated, a qualified society with various educational institutions

[516] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 60-62.
[517] Labourt, *De Timotheo I*, 43.
[518] Mingana, "The Early Spread of Christianity", 306; Labourt, *De Timotheo I*, 43-46.
[519] Tome al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesâ*, 205-234; Mingana, "The Early Spread of Christianity", 307.
[520] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 61-62.

The way was paved for Nestorians to be employed at various levels of the state.[521] Nestorians began to be employed at various levels of the state bureaucracy as clerks (civil servants), translators in translation activities and court doctors. As a result of the growth and diversification of administrative affairs with expanding borders, Muslims needed skilled personnel in the fields of bureaucracy and finance. In the Abbasid bureaucracy (divaniyya), scribe was considered a very important profession.[522] The scribes were mainly engaged in the tasks of kitâbetu "l-İnşâ (official correspondence) and kitâbetu "l-amwâl (financial calculation). Many Nestorians who were skilled in these matters were employed in these positions.[523]

Another important field in which Nestorians are employed is medicine and doctoring. Medical education among Christian Assyrians dates back to ancient times. The fact that being a doctor was an advantageous profession for missionaries led to the development of this field. As it will be remembered, as early as the beginning of the Vth century, Marutha, the bishop of Amid, won the friendship of the Sassanid rulers because of the advantage of this profession. After the closure of the Urfa School, Nestorian scholars who had fled there continued their medical studies both at the Nusaybin School and at the Gundishapur School. Likewise, after the closure of the Antioch Academy by the Roman Empire, many pagan scholars sought refuge with the Sassanids during the reign of Hosrev I (Anushirvan) and they also contributed to the scientific developments there. After this period, the Gundishapur Medical School was founded by Greek and Assyrian scientists. In the early Muslim period, various doctors trained here provided health services to Muslims. The Abbasid caliphs' relationship with Nestorians first started with Nestorian doctors. As mentioned above, after Caliph Mansur settled in Baghdad

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[521] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 59-60.

[522] Ibn al-Muqaffa (d.142/759) "Kings need scribes more than scribes need kings" and al-Muayyed expresses the importance of the scribal profession with the words "Scribes are the seeing eyes, hearing ears and speaking tongues of kings." See Kalkashendi, Abu "l-Abbās Ahmad al-, *Subhu "l-A "shā*, (Cairo: Dār al-Kutūb al-Misriyya, 1922), 1/43.

[523] Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/148.

He fell ill and invited Jarjis b. Buhtishu from the Buhtishu family, a well-established family of physicians at the Gundishapur Medical School, to Baghdad in 765. For 300 years, physicians from this family, who served the Abbasid court as physicians, made significant contributions to the development of Islamic medicine both through their translations and the works they wrote.[524] Apart from this family, many other important and influential Nestorian physicians provided health services. Nestorian doctors not only provided medical services, but also used their strong influence with the caliphs to carry out many activities in favor of their co-religionists.[525] The Nestorian Church also tried to utilize the influence of these doctors as much as possible. In the construction of new churches and monasteries or in various unfavorable situations faced by the church, such as the reduction of taxes, they used their connections in the administration to serve their community.

Undoubtedly, Nestorians were the most active and contributed the most to translation activities during the Abbasid period. With the expansion of the Islamic geography, Muslims' contacts with Hellenistic, Iranian, Indian and other cultures led to an interest and curiosity in them and the need to translate their scientific and philosophical works into Arabic. During the Abbasid period, the translation activities that would continue for about a hundred years started with the translations of the Nestorian doctor Jarjīs b. Buhtīshū from Greek and Persian into Arabic during the reign of Caliph Mansur. Translation activities continued with rational and empirical sciences such as logic, philosophy, mathematics, geometry, astronomy and medicine translated from Greek, Syriac, Sanskrit and Persian. Caliph Mansur allocated a place in his palace as a library for the translated works and it was named "Hizânetu "l-Hikma". During the reign of the later caliphs and especially Caliph al-Ma'mun, this institution was further developed under the name of Bayt al-Hikma and became the academy of sciences of the Middle Ages. In the early periods

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[524] Hasan Doğruyol, "Buhtîşû", *DİA* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 1992), 6/378; Baum and Winkler, *The*

Church of the East, 64.
[525] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/156-163; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 64-65.

Founded as a translation bureau and a library, Beit al-Hikma gradually developed and expanded both physically and functionally, becoming a center for the study of positive sciences and an educational institution.[526] The Syriacs had begun to translate ancient Greek works into Syriac at an earlier period, which had fallen into oblivion with the adoption of Christianity by the Roman Empire. Therefore, Nestorians, who were proficient in Greek, Syriac and Persian, played a greater role than any other group in translating these works into Arabic. During this period, many important Nestorian scholars, especially Hunayn b. Ishaq (810-873) and John b. Māsawayh, were trained.[527]

3.3.3. The Period After Catholicos Timotheos I

Before his death, Timotheos I willed that Isho' bar Nun (823-828) should succeed him as patriarch. Born in Beth Gabbere near Mosul, Iso" studied with Timotheos in Bashush. He taught at the Medain School for a short time and then retreated to the Monastery of Mar Abraham on Mount Izla. While there, he opposed Timotheos' views on the incarnation. Unable to get along with the monks there, he retreated to the Monastery of Mar Elia in Mosul. Although he was hostile to the Patriarch, he was designated by him as his successor. He was elected patriarch in 823 with the support of Gabriel b. Buhtishu and Mihail the physician. Soon after, he wanted to delete Timotheos' name from the list of patriarchs, but he gave up due to the opposition of the bishops. He then abandoned his hostility towards Timotheos and burned his writings against him. He died in 828.[528] After him, Gewargis II (828-830), whose real name was Shirzad, was elected patriarch with the support of the doctors mentioned above. This patriarch was from the village of Henes near Dohuk.

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[526] Mahmut Kaya, "Beytülhikme", *DİA* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 1992), 6/88-90.
[527] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/149-151; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 66-67.
[528] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 75-76; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 66-67; Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesā*, 146; Abona, *Tārihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/165-166. For his works, see Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 309-311, Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 149.

He was raised by his uncle Maran, the metropolitan of Erbil, and became a monk at Beth "Abe Monastery". He later served as the metropolitan of Gundishapur for a long time. Despite the opposition of the bishops, he became patriarch and died in 830.[529] After him, Sabrisho II (831-835), the matriarch of Dimashk, was made patriarch upon the request of Caliph Mamun. Sabrisho was born near Dohuk, lived for a while in the monastery of Mar Abraham in Izla and opened many schools in Baghdad.[530] After Sabrisho's death, there was a dispute among the bishops and doctors for the election of a new patriarch. Some bishops wanted Ibrahim and others wanted Mar Aba, the Metropolitan of Gundishapur, to be the patriarch. Caliph Mu'tasam (833-842) ordered Ibrahim to be the patriarch and imprisoned his rival. Ibrahim II (837-850) was born in the village of Shermin in Akre, lived in the monastery of Beth Abe, and later became bishop of Haditha near Mosul. Until Mar Aba's death, conflict continued within the church. After his death, Abraham II began to govern the whole church, but due to his incompetence, he left the administration to some of his relatives. His disciple Hunuh, who was in charge of financial affairs, embezzled many valuable church properties and fled and became a Muslim.[531] It is understood that the patriarchs who came after Timotheos were incompetent. During this period, Caliph Mu'tasim (833-842) did not show much interest in scientific and cultural studies like his predecessors and started to use Samarra as the capital.[532]

The reign of Caliph al-Mutawakkil (847-861) is significant for the implementation of various provisions that made social life difficult for Christians in the context of dhimmi law. The lively scholarly debates that had been going on in public since the reign of Caliph Mahdi (775-785) were banned, and the beliefs and opinions of the jurists and Ahl al-Hadith scholars, who were influential among the Mutazilites and

outside their ranks, were banned.

[529] Mari b. Suleiman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 76; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 68; Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesā*, 145-146; Albert Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/166.
[530] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 76-77; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fetārike*, 69-70; Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/167.
[531] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 70; Amr b. Metta, *Ahbāru Fatārike*, 70-71; Toma al-Marji,

Kitab al-Ruesa, 143; Abona, *Târih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/169-170; Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 127.
[532] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/170-171.

The Mihna period, in which pressure and violence were used on Christians, was ended. This policy change in Abbasid rule also affected Christians, with many negative repercussions for them. First, fruitful religious debates between Muslim and Christian theologians and theologians began to decline. In addition to the cessation of these free and public discussions, the visibility of Christians in state administration and the public sphere was also reduced.[533] Undoubtedly, the most negative impact on Christians during al-Mutawakkil's reign was the introduction in 850 of certain provisions of dhimmi law that had previously been practically unenforced. Accordingly, dhimmis were to wear distinctive clothes and headdresses, different from Muslims, and to wear a zunic around their waist. They were not to walk around with crosses in the bazaar except on feast days. They may not perform their rituals in the open and may ring bells outside prayer times. They shall not build their houses higher than the houses of Muslims. No sale of liquor and pork in the bazaar and market. Existing churches and monasteries will not be demolished, but no new churches or monasteries will be built in the cities. They would always greet Muslims with respect, would not use Muslim dog tags and would not have seals engraved in Arabic.[534] The election of the patriarch during this period was also very troubled due to the disputes among the Nestorians themselves. Due to the factionalization among the physicians who were active in the Abbasid administration, each group supported a different candidate. The physician Buhtishu' b. Gabriel and John b. Masuwayh, as a result of their initiatives before the palace, Theodisus I (853-858), the candidate they supported, was elected as the patriarch. However, a few months later, Ibrahim b. Nuh, one of the physicians who was a rival of them, started activities before the caliph, attributed many accusations to Buhtishu "a and convinced the caliph that the patriarch was elected by fraud. Thereupon, the patriarch was imprisoned and all the assets of Bukhtishu' b. Gabriel were taken and he w a s exiled. Then the state

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[533] Sidney Griffith, "Faith and Reason in Christian Kalām: Theodore abū Qurrah on Discerning the True Religion," in *Christian Arabic Apologetics during the Abbasid Period (750 - 1258)*, ed. Samir Khalil - Jorgen Nielsen (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 1-2.
[534] Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 142.

Christian officials working in the administration were dismissed and all Nestorian clergy in Samarra, which was used as the capital, were expelled from the city. In addition to the above-mentioned measures, harsher provisions were also implemented. But this situation did not last long. When the caliph's favorite Nestorian doctor, John b. Masuwayh, died in 857, he ordered him to be buried according to his religious rites. When he was informed that there were no Nestorian clerics left in the city, he allowed the patriarch to be released and the clerics to return to the city. However, the Patriarch died shortly after his release.[535] After his death, Sargis I (860-872), the metropolitan of Nusaybin, a favorite of the Caliph, was made patriarch by order of the Caliph himself, despite the opposition of some bishops. However, after his death, the patriarchal chair remained vacant for five years due to internal church disputes. Eventually Anush (877-884), who silenced his opponents with violence, became patriarch. The elections of patriarchs such as John bar Narsai (884-892), John III (893-899) and John IV (900-905), who took office after him, were also the result of conflicts within the church.[536]

Another important development regarding the Nestorian Church during the Abbasid period occurred during the reign of Nestorian Patriarch Ibrahim III (906-937). The Melkite patriarch Elia I made attempts to have a bishop for their church in Baghdad. The Nestorian patriarch who took action prevented this. He then continued his attempts and in 913, he received an official letter from the caliph stating that the Nestorian patriarch had the right of priority over the Jacobite and Melkite patriarchs. Thus, the Nestorian patriarch was officially recognized as the highest Christian representative in the Islamic country.[537] During the reign of the Nestorian patriarch "Abdisho II" (1075-1090), the Nestorian patriarch also received an official letter stating that the Nestorian patriarch had priority over the Jacobite and Melkite patriarchs as the supreme representative of Christians.

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[535] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 78-80; Amr b. Matta, *Ahbāru Fatārika*, 82, Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 143-150, Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/175-176.
[536] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārika*, 80-89, Amr b. Matta, *Ahbāru Fetārika*, 72-83, Abona, *Tārih al-Kanisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/177-186.

[537] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 92-93; Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 194; *al-Kenisat al-Suriāniyyat al-Sharqiyya*, 18; Abona, *Tārih al-Kenisat al-Sharqiyya,* 2/193.

confirmed in writing.[538] Between 650 and 1050, twelve of the thirty patriarchs who served in the Eastern Church were appointed by Muslim rulers.[539] Muslim rulers actually intervened very little in the election of patriarchs. Disputes over the election of patriarchs occurred mainly between bishops and influential Nestorian personalities. They were rarely persecuted throughout Islamic history, especially during the Abbasid period. This was partly due to political reasons, sometimes during the wars with Byzantium and sometimes during the Crusades. However, it should be noted that these oppressions were mainly implemented through the narrowing of the dhimmi law, which negatively affected their religious and social life. In such delicate times, their position shifted from being from the People of the Book to the People of Dhimma.[540]

3.3.4. Scientific and Cultural Studies

During the period from the VIIth century, when the Eastern Church came under Islamic rule, to the XIIIth century, when the Abbasid State collapsed, many important scholars emerged within the church and many works were written in various fields such as theology, biblical exegesis, church law, monastic life, apology and refutation. During this period, Syriac continued to exist as a liturgical language, but gradually declined in scholarly and cultural studies, while Arabic became more widely used.[541] The regions of Northern and Southern Mesopotamia, especially Baghdad, and North-Western Iran were the centers of scholarly and cultural work of the Eastern Church.

During the Abbasid period, an important literature on the debates between Muslim and Christian scholars in the fields of theology and theology began to emerge from the early period. The first Syriac apology was a collection of writings on the Bible, the trinity, the incarnation, and

[538] Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 135, Fiey, *Ahwālu Nasara*, 290-291.
[539] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 43.
[540] Abona, *Târihu "l-Keniseti "sh-Sharqiyya,* 2/287-288.
[541] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 244; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 87.

It is a short letter about a discussion between a Muslim named Amr and the Jacobite Patriarch John (d.648), who asked various questions about Christian law. It is a small defense of the Christian faith, designed to provide ready-made answers to the questions raised by the Muslims. This short letter outlines the topics of discussion that would later become the standard for Syriac and Arabic apologetic works.[542] The first Syriac apologetic in more detail against the standard Muslim objections to Christianity and its doctrines was the Nestorian Theodore bar Koni (VIIIth century). Theodore bar Koni, one of the teachers of the Kashker School, has been attributed many works, such as Bible exegesis, church history, spiritual life and sermons, but his *The Scholion,* which consists of eleven memras, has survived. Based on the teachings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, this work, which is presented as an interpretation of the Bible, is actually a theological handbook prepared for use in Nestorian theology. In the tenth memorial, a dialogue between a master and his disciple, in which the master sets out the answers to possible questions that Muslims might ask about Christian doctrine and religious practice, he defends Christianity against Islam.[543] This work was completed in 792/3.[544] One of the best known apologies is the defense of Christianity, which contains a debate between the Nestorian patriarch Timotheos (d. 823) and the Caliph Mahdi. Preserved in a letter, this apologetic work is very popular and exists in several versions in Syriac and Arabic. The popularity of this letter is due to the reputation of its author, but also to the fact that it is written in a simple and straightforward manner. The patriarch's answers to the caliph's questions are intended to serve as ready-made answers that any Christian can use to answer Muslim questions. Timotheos

In another, unpublished letter, he talks with an Aristotelian Muslim theologian.

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[542] Giriffith, "The Prophet Muhammad", 99-100.
[543] Giriffith, "The Prophet Muhammad", 100.
[544] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 287-289; Adam M. Butts, "Theodoros bar Koni", *GEDSH*, 405-406. For the Syriac edition of this work, see Addai Scher, *Theodor Bar-Konī Liber Scholiorum*, CSCO 55-69/Syri 65-26 (Paris: L. Durbecq, 1910-1912).

He discusses the unity of God, the Trinity and the Incarnation using philosophical arguments. His knowledge of both Islamic theology and the methodology of theologians and theologians set an example for later Christian apologists.[545] Another important Nestorian apologist of the period was Ammar al-Basri, who lived in the IXth century. He wrote a work on Christian theology, *Kitāb al-Masā'il wa'l-Ajwiba,* which responded to Muslim criticism of the Christian faith in the form of questions and answers. He later wrote a shorter version of this work under the title *Kitāb al-Burhān*.[546] It is understood from his works that he was familiar with the Muslim theological world. Hunayn b. Ishaq (d. 873) also wrote an apology.[547] However, the most well-known Christian apology of the period belongs to 'Abd al-Malik b. Ishaq al-Kindi. This treatise, a lengthy defense of basic Christian doctrine and practices, was written in response to a letter from an Islamic scholar named Abdullah b. Ismāʿīl al-Khāshimi inviting him to Islam. Al-Kindi engages in a harsh polemic against the religion of Islam and its prophet. This apology was translated into Latin by the French monk Peter the Venerable (d. 1156), became known in Europe from the seventeenth century, and was frequently used in polemics against Islam in Europe.[548] It is known that Abu'l-Fadl Ali b. Rabban an-Nasrani, secretary of Timotheos I, and Israel of Kashkari also participated in these debates.[549] Mar Elia (Iliyya) bar Shinaya (975-1049), the bishop of Nusaybin, who wrote various works on history, canon law, theology and apology, collected his discussions with Abū al-Qāsim al-Husayn b. ʿAlī al-Maghribī (d. 1027), the vizier during the Marwanid period, in a work called *Majalis al-Elia Matrani Nusaybin.* This work is a study of Christianity and Islam in the context of

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[545] For the Arabic version of the debate with the caliph, see Sako, *Hivârat Messiahiyya-Islâmiyya*, 22-56. For an English translation of the Syriac text, see Mingana*, The Apology of Timothy the Patriarch*, 15-90.
[546] Wageeh Y. F. Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī "s Kitāb al - Burhān : A Topical and Theological Analysis of Arabic Christian Theology in the Ninth Century* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, PhD Thesis, 2013), 31-39.
[547] Giriffith, "The Prophet Muhammad", 103- 104.
[548] Giriffith, "The Prophet Muhammad", 105.
[549] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 63.

It includes seven sessions of discussions on various topics.[550] His works include an important history and an Arabic-Syriac dictionary.

It will be useful to briefly mention some important authors and their works that emerged within the Eastern Church during this period. Patriarch Isho' bar Nun (743-828) wrote various works on the Bible, Church law and liturgy.[551] The names of John b. Masuweyhi (d. 857) and Hunayn b. Ishaq (808-873), who were both directors of Bethlehem, translated various works and wrote works on medicine, should also be mentioned.[552] Isho'dad of Merv (IXth century) wrote the most detailed commentary on the entire Bible based on the views of Theodore of Mopsustia.[553] Aliya al-Anbari (Xth century), a native of Nusaybin and bishop of Anbar (Piroz Shabur), wrote a work in verse entitled *Ktaba d-Durrasha* (Book of Lessons) or *Ktaba d-Ma'wata* (Book of Centuries).[554] Toma al-Merci, who provides information about his monastic life, spent a long time in the monastery of Beth "Abe, and later served as secretary to the Nestorian patriarch Ibrahim II during his patriarchate. He wrote an important work called *Ktābā d-Rishāna/Kitabu "r-Ruesā* (The Book of the Abbots) about the lives of the people associated with Beth "Abe Monastery.[555] Isho'dnah al-Basri, metropolitan of Euphrates Misan (Basra) who lived in the IXth century, wrote a work entitled *Kitab al-Iffe* (The Book of Chastity). It contains the lives of about one hundred and forty monks who lived from the IVth century to the IXth century.[556] Bar Bahlul, who lived in the Xth century, was the author of an important encyclopedia.[557] Emanuel bar Shahhare (d. 980), a monk at the "Upper Monastery" (Dayra "Ellayta) near Mosul, wrote the *Hexaemeron* or *Ktaba d-Estat Yawme*

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[550] For the texts of the debates, see Muhammad Karim Ibrahim al-Shamari, *Majalisu Mar Elia bar Shinaya Matran Nusaybin mea "l-Wazir Abi "l-Qasim al-Husayn b. Ali al-Maghribi (1026-1027)* (Dimashq: Matbaat July, 2011).
[551] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 309-310, Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 148-149.
[552] Abona, *Edebu'l-Lughati'l-Ārāmiyya*, 317-321.
[553] Albert Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 316, Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 150.
[554] Albert Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 368; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 155.
[555] Toma al-Marji, *Kitabu "r-Ruesa*.
[556] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya*, 322-323; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature", 153.
[557] Abona, *Edat al-Lughati al-Ārāmiyya*, 371.

(The Six Days of Creation), a commentary in verse.[558] Patriarch Elia I (d. 1049) wrote the Syriac Book of Nahw according to the Arabic method. He wrote various works in the fields of grammar, law and liturgy. Abdullah Ibn Tayyib (d. 1043), one of the most important doctors and teachers of the period, who lived during the reign of this patriarch, wrote an Arabic work entitled *Fiqh al-Nasara* and many works on exegesis, church law and theology.[559]

"Abdisho bar Bahriz (XI century), Patriarch Elijah Abu Halim III (1018-1190), Yusuf Iso "yab bar Melkun (XII century), Shem "un Shenklavi (XII century), John Bar Zo "bi (XIII century), Suleiman al-Basri (XIII century), Sheikh Khamis bar Kardahi (XIII century), Gewargis Werda (XIII century), John Bar Zo "bi (XIII century). century), Suleiman al-Basri (XIII century), Sheikh Khamis bar Kardahi (XIII century), Gewargis Werda (XIII century), John al-Mawsili (XIII century), Gabriel Kamsaya (XIV century).[560] The most important writer of this period was "Abdisho" Bar Brikha (Subavi) (d. 1318). He was bishop of Sinjar and Beth "Arbaya" and later metropolitan of Nusaybin and Armenia. He was a prolific writer who wrote many works in Arabic and Syriac. In Syriac, he wrote a collection of canons of the council called *Kunnasa d-Qanone Sundadiqaye* (Nomokanon). He prepared a small handbook entitled *Tukkas Dine "Edtanaye* (Canon of the Principles of Ecclesiastical Reasoning). He wrote a short and influential work on the theology of the Nestorian Church, *Marganita* (The Pearl), which summarizes the faith of the Church. He wrote a collection of poetry entitled *Pardaysa d-"Aden* (Paradise of Aden). He wrote a very important poetic catalog of Syriac writers and works up to his time called *Fihristu Muellifin.* This is an extremely important work of Syriac literature. He also wrote a commentary on the Old and New Testaments.[561] All these scholarly and cultural developments in the Eastern Church provide clues about the extent of the church organization.

[558] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya,* 372-374; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature"*,* 156.
[559] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya,* 378-381.
[560] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya,* 386-403.
[561] Abona, *Edebu "l-Lughati "l-Ārāmiyya,* 404-410; Brock, "Studies in Syriac Literature"*,* 165-166.

3.3.5. Church Organization

At the 410 Synod of Mar Ishaq, the Church of the East was organized into six dioceses, Seleucia (the seat of the Catholicos), Beth Lapat (Gundishapur), Nusaybin (Beth "Arbaye), Euphrates Misan (Basra), Hadyab (Erbil) and Beth Garmai, Karka d-Beth Slokh (Kirkuk), and forty bishops attended the synod.[562] However, this does not mean that Christian communities lived only in these regions. For it is reported that it was hoped that the bishops from distant regions, who were not present at the synod, would also accept the decisions of the synod.[563] From this date onwards, the Eastern Church developed continuously and spread its ecclesiastical organization to a large region in the Sassanid lands called Iranshahr and later in the Islamic geography. Simultaneously, it established various dioceses in Central Asia, China and India to the east of the Sassanid and Islamic geography and reached its largest borders in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries. This can be considered a great achievement for the Eastern Church, which was constantly under foreign (non-Christian) rule. By the XIVth century the number of metropolitanates had increased from 19 in 820 to 25. The number of bishops decreased from 105 in 820 to 96 in the early XIth century and reached 200 in the XIVth century. In 1054, when the Western Church was weakened by the split between the Churches of Rome (Catholic) and Constantinople (Orthodox), the Eastern Church, despite being a minority under Muslim rule, developed and grew considerably.[564]

[562] *Synodicon Orientale*, 272, 274.
[563] Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 63.
[564] Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 79.

History	410	650	820	1000	14th century
Catholicos	1	1	1	1	1
Metropolit	6	9	19	20	25
Bishop	38	96	85	75	200
Total	45	106	105	96	226

Table 1: Bishops of the Eastern Church in different periods. [565]

At the head of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Eastern Church are the patriarchs, who are given the title "Catholicos". Below the Catholicos are the archbishops of the dioceses called "Metropolitans/Matrans" and after them the bishops called "Abona".[566] The patriarchal center is the central region of Iraq, known in church tradition as Beth Aramaye (Babylon). This region was called Assyria by the Sassanids. During the Islamic period, Arabic became Nabat and the term Nabati was used for Aramaic and Aramaic.[567] The patriarchal region of Beth Aramaye, where the patriarchal seat of the Eastern Church is located, is centered on Ktesiphon-Seleucia and extends northward to Baghdad and its environs. The Sasanian Ktesiphon-Seleucia, which served as the patriarchal seat, and the Abbasid Baghdad are located in this region. In Synod 410, only Kashker (Vashti) appears as a diocese under the jurisdiction of the catholicos. In this synod, the bishop of Kashker is referred to as the right hand of the catholicos, and after the death of the catholicos, the work of gathering the bishops and electing a new catholicos is entrusted to him.[568] Although later sources omit a few names, at the beginning of the Vth century there were four dioceses, Zabe, Hirta, Dayra d-Qunni and Daskarta d-Malka.

[565] Andrew Thomas Platt, *The Church of the East at Three Critical Points in its History* (Washington: Catholic University of America, PhD Thesis, 2017), 116.
[566] Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya - al-Asuriyya*, 31.
[567] Lucas Van Rompay, "Beth Aramaye", *GEDSH*, 70.
[568] *Synodicon Orientale*, 272.

region is known. Fiey, one of the leading experts on the Eastern Church, distinguishes between Persian and Arab dioceses. According to him, the Persian dioceses, which have their origins in the Sassanid period, are: (1) Kashker, (2) Dayra d- Qunni (known as the oldest monastery in Beth Aramaya), Beth Daraye and Beth Kusaye, (3) Zabe (between Kashker and Seleucia), Numaniya and Dayr Hazqiel, (4) Dasqarta d-Malka (88 km northeast of Baghdad), (5) Hirta, Aqula (Kufa), and Nagran, (6) Piroz Shapur (Anbar). During the Abbasid period, the following regions emerged:
(1) al-Qasr (between Baghdad and Kufa), (2) Niffar (ancient Nippur) and al-Nil, (3) Abdasi and Nahrgür (both in southeastern Iraq), (4) Radan, Baradan and Beth Darun (in the Baghdad moons, but location unknown).[569] In later periods, however, the dioceses of Beth Aramaye were reunited. In the XIVth century, Christianity began to disappear in central Iraq and the north of Iraq gradually became the center of the Eastern Church. The name Beth Aramaye also began to lose its former use and appeal.[570] However, Beth Aramaye is considered to be the heart of both states, as two cities that were used as capitals under both the Sassanids and the Abbasids were located here.

The second important diocese of the Eastern Church is Beth Huzaye (Khuzestan, Ahvaz, Ilam, Susiana). In this region is Gundishapur (Beth Lapat), which served as the summer capital of the Sassanids. During the reign of Mar Aba, the authority to preside over the election of a new catholicos was entrusted to the bishop of Beth Lapat.[571] The synod of 410 mentions the auxiliary dioceses of Karka d-Ledan (Shapur in Iranshahr), Hormizd Ardeshir (Ahvaz), Shushtar (Tuster), Shush (Susa). Later the dioceses of Ram Hormizd and Mihraqan Qadaq (near Isfahan) were added. Towards the end of the Sassanid period, a theological school is known to have existed in Beth Lapat. From the XIVth century

[569] Fiey *Ashur al-Masihiyya*, 3/93-347.
[570] Rompay, "Beth Aramaye", 70-71.
[571] *Synodicon Orientale*, 554.

Since then, the name Beth Lapat has fallen into oblivion.[572] After Beth Huzaye, the second most important diocese is Beth "Arbaye. Beth Arbaye corresponds to the area between Beth Zabdai (Sirnak-Idil) to the north, Balad (Old Mosul) to the south and Nusaybin to the west. Its center is Nusaybin. It includes part of Jazira in Islamic sources. As a geographical region, Beth "Arbaye includes the area south of Nusaybin and west of the Tigris. As a diocese, however, it covers a wider area. It is an important border area between Sassanids and Romans, and later between Abbasids and Byzantium. It includes the following areas: Beth Zabdai (centered in Fınık/Penkaya and within the borders of Sirnak), Beth Kardo (bordering Sirnak-Cizre and centered in the village of Semanin on Mount Cudi), Beth Muskaye (Van-Bahçesaray), Erzen (Siirt-Garzan), Ustan Erzen, Beth Rahmaye, Quba Erzan, Balad (Old Mosul), Kafr Zumar, Sinjar, Kanush (near Sinjar). In the Islamic period, Armenia (centered in Ahlat), Meyafarkin (Diyarbakır-Silvan), Harran, Rasul "ayn, Mardin and Raqqa were added to this diocese.[573] The center of the Mishan diocese is Euphrates Mishan (Wahman Ardeshir) near modern Basra. There were four dioceses, Karka d-Mishan, Rima, River Gul and Ila.[574] The diocese of Beth Germai (Kirkuk) lies between the Little Zab to the north, the Tigris to the west, the Diyala River to the south and the Hamrin Mountains. The episcopal center was the modern city of Kirkuk, known as Karkh Slokh. However, it was later transferred to Shahrezor and Daquqa, east of Beth Garmai. Church organization was established from early times. The city includes the areas of Kurd, Khirbetu Jalal, Lashom, Tahal, Mahuza Aron, Dara (Radan), Beth Niqatur and Borzan. However, with the decline of the Christian population in southern and central Iraq, the southern regions of Tikrit, Tirhan Shina (Guver),

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[572] Sebastian P. Brock, "Beth Lapat", *GEDSH*, 72; Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 64.
[573] Sher, *Tarihu Chaldo wa Assyria*, 2/13-14; Amir Harrak, "Beth "Arbaya", *GEDSH*, 71.
[574] Fiey *Ashur al-Masihiyya,* 3/346-373; Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 64; Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya - al-Asuriyya*, 32-33.

Miskin, Akbara, etc. were included in the boundaries of this diocese.[575] The diocese of Beth Hadyab (Erbil) encompassed the area between the Tigris and the Little Zab and extended into the mountainous region of Mosul, Urmia and Hakkari. As a geographical term, however, Hedyab encompasses the area between the Tigris to the west and the Great and Little Zab rivers to Saladin (Mount Pirmam) in the north. It is a region where Christianity spread in the early period. In the center of this diocese; Hadyab, Habtun, Beth Bagash (south west of Revanduz), Berhis, Debernus, Debir Nahsan, Ramonin, Bamehrkard, Hadise (Hamam Ali), Beth Nuhadra (Duhok and Zakho), Ma'lata, Hanita, Beth Dasen, Marga (Berdesh, Navkur Plain), Salax, Pishder, Aynsifni (Sheikhan) etc.[576] The center of the Persian (Fars) diocese is Rev Ardeshir. Istahr, Veh Shapur, Kish, Darabkerd, Mishkana Kardo (Kurdish Highlands), Ardeshir Kur (Firozabad). It was from here that Nestorian missionaries were directed to India. In the diocese of Beth Madaye (Jibal, Iraqi Persia, Med) there were two metropolitan chairs. The metropolitan see of Beth Raziqaye (Rey) included Kashan and Qom; the metropolitan see of Hulvan included Hemedan, Nihavend, Musbezan, Balashfar, Shahrzor, Isfahan, and Dinever.[577] The diocese of Nineveh (Mosul) was originally part of Beth Hadyab. However, it later became an independent diocese. In Mosul, which is called the Jewish Fortress in the Syriac tradition; Haditha, Beth Nuhadra, Ma'lata, Hanita, Beth Dasen, Merc (Marga), Salax, Aynsifni regions.[578] Besides these, there are Beth Qatraya (Qatar); Aran (Georgia): (Bardaa, Kerec, Alan, Pidankuran); Deylem: (Mokan); Merv (Khorasan): (Tus, Merv, Gurgan, Da'ber Sitay, Sarxis, Nishabur, Abur, Amul); Herat (Afghanistan): (Bosenc (Koryan), Kadis, Sicistan); India: Kerala, China:

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[575] Fiey *Ashur al-Masihiyya,* 3/7-192; Amir Harrak, "Beth Germai", *GEDSH*, 71; Sher, *Tarihu Kaldo wa Assur*, 2/11-12.
[576] Fiey *Ashur al-Masihiyya,* 1/37-252; Shar, *Tarihu Kaldo wa Assur*, 2/12-13; Amir Harrak, "Adiabene", GEDSH, 10-11.
[577] Shar, *Tarihu Kaldo wa Assur*, 2/15-16; Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya - al-Asuriyya*, 33.
[578] Fiey *Ashur al-Masihiyya,* 2/334-851; Habbi, *Kenisat al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya - al-Asuriyya*, 32.

Xian/Changan; Samarkand (Turkestan): Kashgar; Damascus, Jerusalem, Cyprus, Mopsuestia, Malatya, Manbij, Otrar (Kazakhstan), Siri Derya, Kalah (Malacca), Mylapore, Madras, Cranganore, Kottayam, Quilon and the island of Kuria Muria near Oman. Nestorian Church adherents were found in the regions of Tangut, Ongut, Nayman, Kerait and Mekrit.[579] However, the Mongol invasion of the Islamic world, which began in the early eighteenth century, created new opportunities for the Eastern Church, which had a large church organization during the Abbasid period, but also created a very fragile ground.

[579] Habbi, *Keniset al-Mashrik, al-Kildâniyya al-Asuriyya*, 31-34; Shar, *Tarih al-Qaldo wa "l-Asur*, 2/1-18; Buck, "The Universality of the Church of the East", 62-69; Baum and Winkler, *The Church of the East*, 79-80.

PART TWO

BASIC BELIEFS OF THE NESTURIAN CHURCH

The basic theological views of Christianity were shaped by the decisions of a series of councils, not at the time of its emergence, but in a later period. There were great debates on the divinity, trinity, the person of Jesus Christ, the position of Mary and similar issues, and various divisions emerged. The Christians living in Iran continued their existence in the Roman Empire, unaware of these developments among their co-religionists. However, from the beginning of the Vth century, they too began to fall under the influence of the theological agenda in the Roman Empire. This inevitably led to their involvement in the debates within the Roman Empire and created the need to reposition themselves in some way. In accordance with the Diophysite tradition, they positioned themselves against the Monophysites and thought that they were close to the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon. However, they soon realized that the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon were not as close to them as they thought. This led the Eastern Church to take a radical stance against the Christology of these two churches. In all these processes, they were constantly chosen as victims and marginalized in the conflict or unity efforts between the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon and the Monophysites who were active in the Roman Empire. The Eastern Church, on the other hand, consolidated its position in the Iranian sphere.

In this chapter, the basic beliefs of the Eastern Church will be discussed in detail, including their views on divinity, trinity, Christology, the position of Mary, creation, original sin and the afterlife. The sources of the Eastern Church and the views of theologians belonging to this church will be taken as basis. After evaluating the issues in the context of Christianity in general, we will look specifically at

How the Eastern Church interprets it will be emphasized and the church's view will be tried to be revealed. What distinguishes the Eastern Church from other churches is its views on the person of Jesus Christ and the relationship between his divine and human natures.

1. UNDERSTANDING OF THEOLOGY

In the Christian tradition, theological doctrines are dealt with within the subject of theology. Theology is a term formed by the combination of the Greek words "theos" and "logos". While "theos" means God, "logos" is a more complex concept with various shades of meaning such as word, speech, discourse, explanation, reason and thinking. The combination of these two words means "talking about God" or "a logical explanation of God". In its broadest sense, theology is a detailed logical explanation of God, creation and their relationship. Christian theology seeks to give a logical explanation of the God known in the history of Israel and revealed in the incarnation of Jesus Christ (God becoming incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ). But the word theology as used in ancient Greece does not appear in the Greek New Testament. The term theology, which in the Greek world meant discourse about mythological gods, was given a different meaning by the early church fathers as the theology of Jesus Christ, the Logos (Meltha in Syriac) or the Word.[1]

The Syriac or Eastern Christian tradition has been the focus of scholarly attention in recent years because of two important aspects: its language and theology. Experts draw attention to the Semitic and Hellenistic aspects of Syriac theology and literature. This is because the difference between the Semitic world and the Hellenistic world is not only linguistic but also theological. The philosophical approach in the

Hellenistic approach

[1] Richard J. Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 5-7, 602.

and analytical understanding, the Semitic approach emphasizes a symbolic and synthetic understanding. These two different approaches to theology stem not only from the difference in the basic principles of Christianity, but also from the difference in the way these principles are understood and presented. Since Syriac theology and tradition was born within the Jewish tradition, it had a very close relationship with the Jews of Mesopotamia in terms of language, terminology, categories of thought and imagery, and was deeply influenced by Jewish literature. Both communities (church and synagogue) were in contact because they lived in an environment where Zoroastrians were active. Thus, the Peshitta translation of the Old Testament was adopted, Jewish literature was deeply influenced by the culture of the haggadah (the part of the Talmud containing historical parables, tales and epics), and Syriac theology took on a more eschatological (relating to the end times) and apocalyptic (revealing things hidden and giving information about the future) character. Another important feature of Syriac theology is that it approaches divine truth with the eyes of faith rather than seeing it as an intellectual endeavor. In this respect, Syriac theology can be seen as the theology of faith. It was highly influenced by the thought patterns of the Bible and used a typological method. This method is based on a comparison between persons or phenomena in the Old Testament and their counterparts in the New Testament. For example, the manna (bread) given to the Israelites in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt is linked to the Eucharistic bread, and the manna is interpreted as a pre-figure pointing to the Eucharistic bread. Typology has not only been a method for the interpretation of sacred texts, but also the prime mover of theology.[2] While Syriac theology was generally Semitic in character for the first four centuries, from the end of the IVth century it began to be influenced by the theological agenda of the Hellenistic world. As a result, there was a major split in the Syriac world and the Eastern Church in the Iranian area

[2] William Toma, "General Characteristics of East-Syriac Tradition", *Academia* (Accessed 18. 06. 2019), 1-2.

theology continued on its own course. However, the Eastern Church (Eastern Assyrians) was more successful than the Western Assyrians in preserving their Semitic character despite being influenced by the theological agenda of the Hellenistic world.[3]

The key term in Eastern Church theology is the phrase "Mdabbranutha". In Syriac it literally means "guidance" but is usually translated as incarnation or "providence-determination-divine plan".[4] This word is derived from the Hebrew word "dabar" in the Bible. The word "dabar" is used in the Old Testament in the sense of "word-word" and in the context of the "word of God" as a way for the transcendent God to communicate with creation through revelation to the prophets.[5] The Greek word for Mdabbranutha is "oikonomia", which also appears in the New Testament.[6] It is a combination of the words "oikos" (household-family) and "nomos" (order, administration, law) and means household management and family order.[7] The English word "mdabbranutha", which is translated as "economy" and sometimes as "dispensation" (grace, favor), is translated as "providence" in Arabic works written by the Church of the East in the Islamic period, and is referred to as divine providence or the providence of Christ.[8] "The "providence of salvation" (mdabbranutha), or in other words, the divine plan and roadmap leading to salvation, is central to the theology of the Eastern Church. In its broadest sense, this phrase refers to God's actions to bring about human salvation, as well as his relationship with creation and the entire cosmos.

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[3] Sebastian, P. Brock, "The christology of the Church of the East", ed. D. Afinogenov - A. Muraviev, *Traditions and Heritage of the Christian East* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo "Indrik", 1996), 165.
[4] Marijke Metselaar-Jongens, *Defining Christ, The Church of the East and Nascent Islam* (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, PhD Thesis, 2016), 26, footnote 115.
[5] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 113; Sako, *Abauna "s-Süryan*, 25. "For the word (dābār) of the Lord is true, He does all things faithfully, By the word (dābār) of the Lord were the heavens made, and the heavenly bodies by the breath of His mouth". Psalms, 33/4,6; "He sent His word (dābār) and healed them, and delivered them from the pit of death". Psalms, 107/20.
[6] "I have become a servant of the church by the commission God has given me for your benefit, to proclaim the word of God (οἰκονομία-oikonomia), that is, the mystery hidden from ages and generations past, but now revealed to His saints". Colossians, 1/25.
[7] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology,* 119; Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 161.
[8] Sako, *Abauna "s-Süryan*, 25-26. In Islamic literature, the word "oikonomia" is translated as "tedbîrü "l-menzil". See Mustafa Çağrıcı, "Tedbîrü "l-Menzil", *DİA* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 2011), 40/260- 261.

and providence, divine order, divine design, God's sovereignty, God's rule, God's favor. In this context, the word "Mdabbrana" (mudbbir) is also used in the sense of leader, manager and guide. The term "Mdabbranutha" encompasses all divine actions in which the elements of the Trinity participate, from the beginning of creation to the end of time. In this sense, it includes major theological topics such as God, the Trinity, creation, the person and actions of Jesus Christ, the afterlife, etc. It is used in a broad sense to refer to the divine plan and divine design, and in a specific sense to refer to the incarnation of Christ. Jesus Christ plays a central role in the divine plan for the salvation of fallen humanity. In this respect, the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ are the most important topics of "mdabbranutha" theology, especially in liberation theology. The theology of providence, understood as a historical march, begins with creation and incarnation and continues with union and corporation. The Eastern Church calls Christ "the person of providence/mdabbranutha". The fact that he is regarded as the divine son and the absolute example of human brotherhood reveals the diophysite character of this church. Because the guidance of the transcendent God was not sufficient for the salvation of humanity, the transcendent Son of God (the divine logos/skelâm) had to take on a human body, live among human beings and guide them personally in order for salvation to be realized. Therefore, when we use the term incarnation, we mean everything that God accomplished for the sake of human salvation, from the beginning to the end. When the Latin Fathers distinguish between incarnation and sacrifice, they emphasize the latter, while the Eastern Church Fathers focus on the incarnation itself.[9]

Another use of the Hebrew term "dabar" is that it refers to the relationship between God and the Children of Israel, who are related to God. It emphasizes that God, the father of the Children of Israel, rules and governs them in the same way that the head of a family rules his household. This understanding has been used by Christian theologians

[9] Sako, *Abauna "s-Suryan*, 25-26, 161-162; Thomas A. Carlson, *Christianity in Fifteenth-Century Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 118-123.

It is adapted to the Christian community, God's new people ("Amme d-Alaha). In this framework, God the Father, like the head of a family, has laid out a plan for the government, administration and salvation of his children. Accordingly, those who follow Christ's example and live according to God's rule and divine plan become sons of God and are saved. In the interpretation of the Bible, the Eastern Church, starting from the here and now, extends the understanding of mdabbranutha to all areas of life and uses the method of typology. Biblical interpretation is expressed through literary texts called memras and madrasas[10] and catechetic theology is practiced instead of theoretical theology. While the systematic method is rarely used, the method of negative (apophatic) theology is employed. For example, when talking about God, it is not what God is, but what he is not.[11]

The Eastern Church's understanding of "mdabbranutha" is closely related to the Antiochene tradition of interpretation. This tradition rejected the Alexandrian tradition of allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament concerning the incarnation and Christology and accepted only the prophecies concerning the coming of the human Messiah. The Antiochian tradition of interpretation is called "literal" because of its emphasis on the integrity of the meaning of the Bible and its narratives, and "historical" because of its interpretation of the various texts of the Bible, taking into account the different ways in which God's teaching was expressed, depending on the level of understanding and comprehension of different generations. The acceptance of a pedagogical understanding of God, conceived as a pedagogue, expressing the truth in different ways for different generations was typical of the Antiochian tradition of interpretation, and this allowed for different explanations for the same truth. In parallel to Mar Efrem, Theodore of Mopsuestia's interpretation of the biblical history,

God's pedagogical goal of guiding human beings to eternal life in heaven

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[10] Memra means sermon, speech, address, explanation and is used for verse works written using certain verses that contain different subjects such as theology, narrative of events and hymns. Madrasha, on the other hand, are verse texts that deal with various subjects such as explanation, exegesis, commentary; hymns and hymns with teaching. Zafer Duygu - Kutlu Akalın, *Introduction to Christology, Miaphysite, Dyophysite and Chalcedonian Understandings*, 38, 42.

[11] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 24, 26.

[12]His interpretation of the term "mdabbranutha" as a manifestation of God's plan for man's salvation throughout history, in which Christ plays a central role, is closely linked to his soteriological (salvation-related) understanding.[13] Since the Antiochian Christological tradition was shaped by a concern for salvation, he interpreted the term "mdabbranutha" as the guidance necessary for humanity in God's plan of salvation throughout history, in which Christ plays a central role. Whereas Theodore of Mopsuestia used the term in the context of God's plan of salvation, Narsay used it to refer to the actions of the divine logos in the incarnation. He makes a distinction between the divine nature of the logos and its actions of love, will and power, and refers to these activities with the expression "mdabbranutha".[14] This phrase appears for the first time in the Collection of Eastern Synods in Synod 486 and is used in the sense that Narsay uses it.[15]

2. CATECHISM IN THE NESTURIAN CHURCH

In Christianity, after the Bible, the "Nicene Creed" is accepted as the measure of orthodoxy. The Eastern Church officially accepted the Creed of the Council of Nicaea (325) with the Council of Mar Isaac, the first synod held in 410. The Church has always adhered to the Catechism of the Council of Nicaea and used it as the basis for updated creeds in later synods.[16] In the tradition of the early Eastern Church, three Syriac copies of the Catechism of the Council of Nicaea have survived. The first two copies are the creed adopted at the Council of Mar Isaac, one version of which is recorded in the minutes of the Collection of the Synods of the East, and the other is preserved through the Syriac Orthodox redaction.

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[12] The expression "Mdabbranutha" literally means "guidance" in Syriac, but is usually understood as "incarnation" and "vigilance-precaution". These terms do not reflect the Syriac meaning of education and guidance. See Metselaar-Jongens, *Defining Christ,* 26, footnote 115.
[13] Lucas Van Rompay, "Theodore of Mopsuestia", *GEDSH*, 401-402.
[14] Metselaar-Jongens, *Defining Christ,* 26, 58, 71, 75.
[15] *Synodicon Orientale*, 301.
[16] Chediath Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great* (Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies 49, 1982), 59.

The third version was prepared by Bishop Marutha of Meyafarkin.[17] The Syriac Orthodox version was found to be the oldest and most original.[18] In this creed, expressions reminiscent of the phrase "filioque" are used. It is understood that the copy in the Collection of the Eastern Synods was altered in a later period. As a matter of fact, the use of the title of catholicos for Mar Ishaq, which began to be used in the minutes of the Council of Mar Ishaq only after the V century, reveals that some manipulations were made on the minutes of the council.[19] There are minor differences between these three copies. The phrase "the Son is of the substance/jewel of his Father" is used in the Eastern Collection version as "men ituta d-aba", while in the Syriac Orthodox version it is used with the pronoun "men ituta d-abaw". In Marutha's version it is used as "bar kyaneh d- aba" meaning "the Son is of the nature of the Father". In addition, the term Homoousius is rendered "bar kyana d-abaw" in the Syriac Orthodox version and "bar kyana d- aba" without the pronoun in the Marutha version, while in the Collection of the Eastern Synods it is rendered "bar ituta d-aba".[20]

> In addition to the Catechism of the Council of Nicaea, it is likely that the Synod of Mar Aba

The "Creed of the Councils of Nicaea-Istanbul" (544) was also widely used in the liturgy of the Eastern Church[21] . This creed is actually the text used by Theodore of Mopsuestia in his commentary on the Nicene Creed. In the 544 synod's final canon, it was stated that this commentary by Mopsuestian was the Eastern Church's version of the Nicene Creed.

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[17] Bishara Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed (Tafsir al-amanah al-kabirah)*, Chief Editors: Ronney el Gemayel, S. J- Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala (Cordoba: CNERU-CEDRAC, Series Syro-Arabica 9, 2018), 37-40.

[18] André de Halleux, "Le symbole des évèques au synode de Séleucie-Ctésiphon (410)", in ed. G. Wiessner, *Erkenntnisse und Meinungen II,* Göttinger Orientforschungen Reihe Syriaca 17 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1978), 162-163.

[19] Sebastian P. Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 126; "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 82; Bishara Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 356.

[20] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 41.

[21] See *The Liturgy of the Church of the East*, (Burglingame, California, 1978), 8-9.

It is stated that it fully represents his point of view on the Ijtihadnamesi.[22] The Syriac translation of this work, originally in Greek, has survived. Although this work is labeled as a commentary on the Nicene Creed, the text used is slightly different from the Nicene Creed used by other churches and constitutes a broader version. Whereas the texts used in other churches only refer to "the Only Begotten Son", this text refers to "the firstborn of all creation". The phrase "the only begotten Son" and "the Firstborn" are also added.[23] "Only begotten Son" and "Firstborn" are two very important terms of the Antiochian tradition that point to the two natures in Jesus Christ, as will be discussed later. The Nicene-Istanbul Creed, which was used in Syriac for liturgy, was translated into Arabic during the Islamic period. There are three important Arabic translations known. One of them was prepared by Mar Elia, the metropolitan of Nusaybin, in the XIth century and a commentary was written on it. One of the other two copies was prepared by Ibn Muqaffa in the Xth century, while the author of the other copy, dated to the XIIth century, is unknown.[24] There are some minor differences between these texts and Ibn Muqaffa's text is shorter than the others. Of these, the text prepared by Mar Elia is important. This catechism-style text aims to defend the trinity against Muslims and the Christological views of the Eastern Church against other Christian churches other than the Nestorians, especially the Jacobites.[25] There are also minor differences between this text prepared by Mar Elia and the basic text used in the liturgy. For example, two different terms derived from the verb root "s-l-h" are used to express the adjective "apostolic". In the liturgical text the title "apostolic" is rendered "slihuta", while in Mar Elia's text it is rendered "msalahta". In both texts

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[22] For Theodore's commentary on the Nicene Creed, see Alphonse Mingana (ed. and trans.), *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, Woodbrooke Studies 5 (Cambridge: W. Haffer and Sons, 1932). This work also contains the first ten memras of Mopsuestian's Catechetical Homilies, which should be studied before baptism. See ibid, 7.
[23] Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 35-39.
[24] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 44-46.
[25] For the text, see Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 84-147.

The term homoousius is used in Arabic as "bar kyaneh d-Abaw" in the sense of "the Son of his father's nature". Mar Elia translated homoousius into Arabic as "Ibnu jawheri ebihi wa kyanihi" meaning "Son of the substance and nature of his Father" and added the word "kyana". He used the verbs "to descend" (nazila) for the Messiah's descent from heaven and "to be manifested" (tajesseme) for his incarnation.[26] Another important creed used by the Nestorian Church is a short creed on Christology found in the "Teshbokhta" (Hymn of Praise) of Babai the Great. The four important creeds used by the Eastern Church are listed below.

According to the Syriac Orthodox Document, the Council of Mar Isaac, Nicene Creed

"We believe in God the Father, in his Son, who made heaven and earth, and in him the world above and the world below, and in him the resurrection and renewal of all creation. And we believe in His Son, the Only-begotten Son, born of the substance of His Father (*men ituta d-abaw*). He is God from God, light from light, true God from true God, and of the same nature as the Father, not created (*bar kyana d-abaw/homoousios*). For the sake of us humans created through Him and for our salvation, He descended, put on a body (*Ibesh pagra*), became man, suffered, rose again after three days, ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of His Father. He will come to judge the living and the dead. We confess the Holy Spirit (*Ruha d-Qudsha*), the source of life and the Holy Spirit (*Ruha d-Qudsha*), the Spirit of life emanating from the Father and the Son, in one Trinity, in substance (*ituta*) and in one will (*sebyana)*."[27]

The Nicene Creed of the Council of Mar Isaac according to the Collection of the Eastern Synods

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. We believe in Jesus Christ, the only Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of the Father, the Only-begotten Son, of the substance of the Father *(men ituta d-aba/ousia*). He is God from God, light from light, true God from true God, not made, of the same substance as the Father (*bar ituta d- aba/homoousios*). All things in heaven and on earth were created through him. For the sake of us human beings and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, became flesh (*etgasham*) and became man (*w-etbarnas*). He suffered, rose again after three days and ascended to heaven. He will come to judge the living and the dead. And we believe in the Holy Spirit. We believe that there was a time when he [the Son] was not, or that he did not exist before he was born, or that he was created out of nothing, or that he came from another essence (*knoma/hypostasis*), or from another essence/gem; or that the Son of God

[26] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 40-43.
[27] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries",

133.

The catholic and apostolic Church excommunicates those who say that they are subject to change (*meshtahlpana*) or modification (*w-meshtagnyana*)."[28]

The Catechism of the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople read in the Liturgy of the Eastern Church

"We believe in one God, the Father (*Alaha Aba*), Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible. And we believe in one Lord Jesus Christ *(Marya Isho' Msiha*): Son of God (*bre d-Alaha*), the Only Son (*Yikhidaya*), the firstborn of all creation (*buqra d-kholhin*). He was born [adopted] from His Father before all the worlds and was not created. He is the true God from the true God (*Alaha, sharira d-min Alaha*). He is of the same substance as His Father (*bar kyanah d-abaw*). Through Him the worlds were formed and everything was created. He came down from heaven for us humans (bnaynasha) and our salvation (*porqanan*), became flesh (*etgasham*) and became man (*barnasha*) by the power of the Holy Spirit (*Ruha d- Qudsha*). He was conceived and born of the Virgin Mary (*Maryam btholta*). He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, buried and rose again on the third day, as it is written (in the Holy Scriptures), ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of His Father. He will come back to judge the living and the dead. And we believe in the one Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth (*Ruha d-Shrara*), the life-giving Spirit (*Ruha Makhyana*) who comes from the Father (*napiq*). And we believe in the one Church *(Edta*), which is holy, apostolic (*shlikhayta*) and catholic (universal). We confess the one baptism for the forgiveness of sins (*mamoditha*), the resurrection of our dead bodies (*d-paghrain*) (*qyamta*) and eternal life. Amen."[29]

Babai's Creed in the Hymn of Praise (Teshbokhta)

"Christ, the Son of God, worshipped by all in both natures, is one. In his divinity he was born of the Father before the beginning of all time; in his humanity he was born of Mary at the consummation of time, united in one body. His divinity is not of the mother's nature, nor is his humanity of the Father's nature. The natures retain their particular uknum (*knome/hypostases*) in the person of the one Son. Just as the divinity is three persons in one nature, so the sonship of the Son is two natures in one person. This is what the Holy Church has taught."[30]

3. DIVINITY AND SUBMISSION

The word trinity, which means "trinity" in the dictionary, refers to the Christian understanding of divinity as consisting of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is explicit and systematized in the New Testament.

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[28] *Synodicon Orientale,* 22-23 (262-263); Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 133.
[29] *The Liturgy of the Church of the East*, 8-9; Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 42-43; *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari Disciplers of the East (The Anaphora of the Blessed Apostles)*, Translation from Aramaic by M. J. Birnie, Nestorian.org, (Accessed 20. 06. 2019), 10-11.
[30] Available at: http://www.nestorian.org/index.html. (Accessed 20. 06. 2019).

There is no belief in a trinity. First, at the Council of Nicaea (325), the deity of Jesus Christ was accepted as the official belief of Christianity with the adoption of the term homoousios, which means that Jesus Christ is of the same essence as God, and then at the Council of Constantinople (381) with the adoption of the deity of the Holy Spirit, the trinitarian belief was accepted as the official belief of Christianity. There is no systematic understanding of the Trinity in early Syriac literature. With the Eastern Church's acceptance of the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople, this belief was officially accepted. The Council of Constantinople, which finalized the Trinity, was largely shaped according to the understanding of the Trinity of Basil (d. 379), bishop of Caesaria, his brother Gregory of Nyssa (d. 395) and Gregory of Nazianzus (d. 339), known as the Cappadocian Fathers. The Cappadocian Fathers formulated the Trinity as one "ousia" (essence) and three "hypostasis". While the term hypostasis was used synonymously with ousia at the Council of Nicaea for the divine substance and nature, the Cappadocian Fathers used this term to refer to each element of the Trinity. Accordingly, the distinction between ousia and hypostasis is based on a general and particular distinction between the general human species and a particular human specimen. Since the Latin equivalent of the term hypostasis is "Substantia" (being-person), Western theologians objected that Eastern (Greek) theologians conceived of the Trinity as "three being-persons". Another important feature of the Eastern understanding of the Trinity is the emphasis on the three elements of the Trinity rather than the common divine essence and nature. Eastern theology focuses on the unity in three, while Western theology focuses on the trinity in one.[31] The Eastern Church was largely influenced by the Cappadocian Fathers' understanding of the Trinity. According to this understanding, which is based on the distinction between ousia and hypostasis, ousia, or essence or physis, is abstract and collective, while hypostasis, or person, is concrete and singular. The Syriac word for hypostasis is knoma (uknum).

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[31] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 123-126.

It is precisely in this context that the term is understood and used. Not only do knomas have the properties of ousia (substance), but each knoma also has its own idioms/dilayta. Therefore, each knoma is distinguished from other knomas belonging to the same substance by its unique characteristics. While the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are equal in sharing a single divinity as three divine knoma (uknum), they differ in terms of their characteristics of fatherhood, sonship and emergence. Nevertheless, the Father is recognized as the source of the Son and the Holy Spirit.[32] In the context of God and the Trinity, the Eastern Church attached great importance to the relationship between God and human beings, i.e. mdabbranutha (providence). The focus was on God's revelation and providence rather than on the ontological evaluation of God. God is not evaluated only in terms of His essence; the focus is on His aspect directed towards the world and human beings.[33]

In various synods held after the Council of Mar Isaac (410), the Eastern Church tried to explain the doctrine of the Trinity within the framework of the Cappadocian Fathers' understanding of the Trinity. In the Synod of Seleucia organized by Catholicos Mar Akak

(486) the belief in the Trinity is set forth in the following words: "The faith of all of us should be to confess the one divine nature (kyana) existing in the three perfect natures of the true and eternal trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit."[34] Here the term "kyana" is used as a synonym for ousia, in the sense of nature and natures, to express the common divine nature of the Trinity. The phrase "three perfect knomas" means that each element (person) of the Trinity perfectly manifests the one divine nature (kyana) with all its natural characteristics. For example, if the divine nature (kyana) is eternal, then the three perfect divine natures (knoma) are eternal. Knoma is closely related to kyana (nature), and knoma also refers to the distinction between multiple elements that belong to the same common nature (kyana). In the terminology used here, Eastern

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[32] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 52.
[33] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 29.
[34] *Synodicon Orientale,* 301-302; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth

to Early Seventh Centuries", 133.

It appears that the Church tried to express the Cappadocian Fathers' doctrine of the Trinity in its own terms.[35] In the Synod of Mar Aba (544), the doctrine of the Trinity is expressed quite simply as belief in one God and the one nature of God (ba-hdanayut kyana).[36] There is no mention of the three knomes or the names Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, in the Christology section of the text, the trinity is mentioned as the only divinity in the three knomata. In the excommunications section of the synod, it is elaborated a little more.

> "... and cursed be he who adds a fourth to the holy and immutable Trinity. And whoever does not direct his prayer to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and adds to them another person, or whoever does not believe that the name of the Son at the same time reveals the divinity and humanity of Jesus, or whoever does not accept the Trinity when he prays to Jesus, let him be accursed."[37]

A text of excommunication from Synod 576 reads, "This is a true belief in the three persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are one glory and true nature. [This faith] rejects the followers of Mani, Marcion, Bardaysan and those who follow their cause. ... And [by this faith] the followers of Arius, Eunomius[38] , and Apollinarius[39] .... those who confuse the equality of the holy Trinity (tlitayuteh) are expelled, expelled and destroyed"[40] . This excommunication begins with a confession of the true and correct belief that the divine nature is composed of three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This confession can be read as a polemical response to the accusation of adding a fourth knoma to the Trinity, similar to the excommunication made by the previous synod.[41] The Synod of 585 had to deal with the trinitarian faith in relation to the Nicene-Istanbul Catechism of Theodore of Mopsuestia.

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[35] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 360.
[36] *Synodicon Orientale*, 541; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 134.
[37] *Synodicon Orientale,* 542-543; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 135.
[38] He was one of the Neo-Arian pioneers who denied that Jesus was the incarnation of God and argued that he was a man who received divine power from the one God. He was exiled in 370. Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 43, 107-110.
[39] An extreme monophysite bishop of Leodicea in Syria who argued that the human nature in Jesus was replaced by the divine logos and that Jesus did not have a fully human nature. He was excommunicated at the 381 Council of Constantinople. Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 140.
[40] *Synodicon Orientale*, 373; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 375.

[41] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 376.

in the light of their interpretation. Accordingly, there is belief in an omnipotent God the Father, a Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and a Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father. Although the sequential reading of these words may seem to put a certain distance between the names of the Holy Trinity, in fact, due to the presence of special and appropriate terms attached to them, the Fathers considered it necessary to establish such a link with this composition in order to indicate that the meaning of the Trinity is above number. That is, the words "one ... one ... one" should be understood as referring to the one and only nature of the divine substance. In accordance with the biblical injunction "Baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"[42] , the words Father, Son and Holy Spirit indicate the difference of the natures of substance. By adding the words God, Lord and Spirit, common terms are added to the individual names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This makes it clear that these are common terms for all three knomata, that is, the Father is God, Lord and Spirit; the Son is Lord, God and Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is God, Lord and Spirit. In this way, the equality of essence/jewel and nature, the distinction of the knomata, and the unity of divinity (hdanayut) are established. According to the synod, the equality of the divine substance and nature is put forward against Arius' idea that violates the equality of the substance of the Trinity, and the difference of the knomas that make up the Trinity is pointed out against the Jews who say that God has only one knoma.[43] In the 596 and 605 synods, the understanding of the Trinity as three knomas in one divine nature (kyana) was continued.[44] The Synod of 612 confessed that the divine nature is eternally "one" and perfect in its essence (ituteh) and in all its aspects, not accepting any addition or subtraction. According to the Synod, it is a solitary being (itya) and transcendent God. He is known and confessed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A nature with three natures (tlitay

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[42] Matthew, 28/19.
[43] *Synodicon Orientale*, 133; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 136.
[44] *Synodicon Orientale*, 197-198, 209-210; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods

of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 139-140.

qnome itya "it) and knomas with a single eternal nature (hdanay kyana mtomaya). There is no distinction between the knomas called fatherhood, sonship and emergence (the Holy Spirit), except for their distinct characteristics (dilayata).[45]

Outside the synods of the Eastern Church, various interpretations of the Trinity were put forward by many writers belonging to this church. Narsay, one of the most important writers of the Eastern Church, used the term "itta" (being) to refer to God's transcendent being and "ituta" (essence/jewel) to refer to God's divinity. In the substance of the one God, he distinguished the three elements of the Trinity and their activities as Father, Son, and emergent. He used the word "knoma/uknum" to designate each element of the Trinity, not "parchopa" (prosopon/person). Narsay said, "When I say three uknum, I do not mean three beings. The three uknum are but one being. They are three in name. They are one and equal in their nature" and "There is no greater or lesser among the three uknums. We distinguish them only by their attributes."[46] His statements can be given as examples. The term "kyana" (nature) used by him is used in the sense of abstract nature rather than referring to the same nature. Accordingly, it refers to the common nature between a single genus or species. Therefore, he often uses expressions such as divine nature, human nature, the nature of bread, the nature of water, and so on. According to Narsay, God and the Trinity are not the subject of reason and demonstration. They can only be the subject of faith. Nevertheless, Narsay tries to explain the unity of God and the trinity of the Trinity with the examples of the sun and the human being, which are frequently used in the Eastern Church. According to him, the sun cannot be called three separate suns even though it contains three different elements such as sphere, heat and light. The sun is one in its sphere, heat and light and is called one sun. Human existence, too, is composed of body, nafs (soul) and

[45] *Synodicon Orientale*, 564-565; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 140.
[46] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 30.

and other faculties such as speech, will, life. But despite all this, man is a single being. All actions are attributed to that one being. Narsay uses the method of negation when talking about God's attributes, trying to reveal what God is not rather than what He is. He uses "He is one (only) being. He is like him" or "You are like you. You remain yourself without any change, and your remembrance speaks tirelessly to all creatures"[47] . In many places, Narsay uses the word "remz" in the sense of an intermediary between God and human beings, implying an independent person. In the sentence "He sent his remz to Eve's daughter and she became a fetus"[48] and similar expressions he uses, one gets the impression that he uses this expression synonymously with the word (logos) and Christ.[49]

Like Narsay, Babai the Great uses the word "itya", derived from the word "it", for the transcendent being of God, and "ituta" for the nature, substance and essence of this being. For him, God is eternal being (itya) and sublime in His being (ituta). He uses the phrase "itya d-"itaw", which is the Syriac translation of the Hebrew phrase "I am He"[50] . He gives various names and attributes for God, such as the creator and cause of all things ("elat kul), eternal being, most perfect, substance, true life, spirit, light, omnipotent and sovereign. According to him, the name Allah (Alaha) is a special, unique and sublime name that points to the essence and unity of God. According to Babai, who places special emphasis on God's transcendent existence, God's essence and substance cannot be encompassed by our knowledge. God the Creator is the cause of all goodness and the only eternal being. He is timeless and unchanging and is above all the visible and invisible universe. He is unmanifest, indivisible into parts, and immortal.[51] Babai cites references from the Old Testament for the elements of the Trinity

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[47] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 106.
[48] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 106.
[49] Sako, *Abauna "s-Syrians*, 106-107, 109.
[50] Exodus, 3/14.
[51] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 108, 110-112; Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 162-163.

and gives examples. In fact, this is contrary to the interpretive tradition of Theodore of Mopsuestia. For Theodore thought that the Old Testament writers had no knowledge of the Trinity. Likewise, according to Nestorius, the Son and the Holy Spirit were unknown before Christ. Christ Himself was the first to teach it.[52] According to Babai, the Holy Trinity has only one divine nature (kyana). Divinity is present in the three knomas. Each of the divine knomas is distinguished from the other by its parchopa (prosopon). The Father appears in the first knoma with his unique qualities. He is not the Son and not the Holy Spirit. The Son appears with the characteristics of the second knoma, the Logos, showing that he is not the Father or the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also appears with the specific characteristics of the third knoma. Apart from the specific characteristics of each knoma, everything else is common to the three divine knomas. When we say three, it should not be understood numerically as one, two, three. Babai says, "He is one, one, one. Three is one. He is the unique God and creator of all things."[53] According to him, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not three names attributed to divinity as Sabellius[54] thought, nor are they knomas of different substances as Arius argued. They are all one true and perfect knoma in one nature. Babai distinguishes between the nouns of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as fatherhood, sonship, and spirit. Accordingly, the Father is the true Father and indirectly points to the Son. Fatherhood distinguishes him from the Son. The Son is not the Father, but his divine sonship indirectly points to divine fatherhood. The Holy Spirit is in the Father and the Son and emanates from both. All three are one absolute truth and eternally one. The three Persons of the Trinity cannot be separated from each other, nor can they be mixed together. Babai tries to explain the unity and trinity in the Trinity with various analogies. The sun and its image, which is often used in the Eastern Church.

[52] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 114; Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 58.
[53] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 115; Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 163.
[54] He was a Christian theologian who lived in the 3rd century. In Church literature he is categorized as a modalist monarchianist. According to this theology, a single divine being manifested himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This triune name, known as the Trinity, is nothing but a temporal mode of divine activity. The Father and the Son are different aspects of the same essence and have the same identity. Kaçar, *Christianity in Late Antiquity*, 30, 42.

He gives the example of fire, heat and light. Accordingly, the sun cannot be divided into fire, heat and light. Likewise, they are not one and the same thing. Although each of them does not exist on its own (knoma la mqayyame), they are one power (haile). The three exist simultaneously and one is not prior to the other.[55] According to the Babai, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are united in a unique divine nature in the form of the three Persons: one power, one will, one dominion, and one sovereignty. At the same time, however, each knoma of the Trinity retains its own attributes without mingling with each other. The three divine knomas are infinitely one in their entirety (unum quid: had enun kul b-kul).[56] For this he gives the example of three lamps illuminating a room. Accordingly, what emanates from three different sources is a single light. But the light of the three is one and equal.[57]

In the apologetic works of Christian writers, especially Nestorians, against Muslim theologians and theologians in the Islamic period, it was felt that the theological and metaphysical system of the Cappadocian Fathers, which was frequently used in relation to the Trinity, needed to be modified due to its inadequacy. In this context, an effort was made to use a common language with Muslim theologians in order to be better understood by their Muslim interlocutors when defending the doctrine of the Trinity. This was facilitated by the fact that both sides shared the same philosophical background. From this period onwards, in addition to the philosophy and propositions related to the defense and explanation of trinity, the categories of divine attributes, which were an important part of the Islamic debates of the period, were also used and the elements of trinity were tried to be justified in the context of attributes.[58] Since Muslims considered the doctrine of trinity to be contrary to the principle of monotheism and a form of polytheism, the theologians of the Eastern Church felt the need to explain the doctrine of God and trinity in a more comprehensible way. Therefore, they believed that trinity refers to the triune nature of the one God.

[55] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 116; Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 163.
[56] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 132-133.
[57] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 164.
[58] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 53.

They have tried to address the issue in the context of God's attributes in order to demonstrate that it is a form of tawhid and that it should be accepted as a form of tawhid.

The debate between Timotheos I, the Catholicos of the Eastern Church during the Abbasid period, and Caliph Mahdi is important in terms of revealing these efforts of the Eastern Church. In response to Caliph Mahdi's question, "How is it that the three persons (in the Trinity) do not mean three Gods?" Timotheos says that by believing in the Trinity, one does not believe in three separate persons, but in three Persons. According to him, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one deity, one nature and one substance. Just as the caliph is one person with the word and the spirit. Just as this does not imply three caliphs, so God is one deity with word and spirit. The spirit and the word are inseparable from Him. If the word and spirit were separated from God, then there would be a God who does not live and cannot speak, which is impossible. Timotheus states that the word comes from him as speech and the Holy Spirit comes from him as life. He then lists evidence from the Old and New Testaments that the word and the spirit are eternally present in God.[59] Here, he tries to express the word and the spirit as essential attributes that are eternally present in God in the form of speech and life. The Caliph asks, "Is there a difference between the Son and the Spirit? Why is the Son not the Spirit, and why is the Spirit not the Son?" To the Khalifa's question, he states that there is no difference between the essences with respect to substance, but there is a difference between them with respect to each other in the sense that one is not born, one is not born, and the other emanates. According to him, the Father is the source of the Son and the Spirit. One was born from him and one emanated from him. This is eternally realized. This is not a physical division or separation, nor is it a birth and emanation through a limb. For God is not an inkling or a body. Timotheos gave various examples to support this view. Accordingly, word and love are born from the soul. But this is not a birth and division or separation by means of a limb. The same

[59] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 32-34.

In this way, love and word are not the same, but they are different from each other, and they are present in the soul from the moment it exists. But both exist in it without being mixed with each other. According to him, just like this, the word was born from God the Father and the soul emanated from him. The soul is not the word and the word is not the soul.[60] In this way, he is expressing that the three essences in the one substance are equal in their nature, although they differ from each other in their essence. Timotheos tries to explain Caliph Mahdi's question, "If the three essences are not separated from each other, then are the Father and the Spirit also embodied (united) with the word?" with the word (speech) of the Caliph. Accordingly, when the Khalifa's word is written on paper, it cannot be said that the Khalifa's soul and mind have merged with the paper. But at the same time they are not separated from the word. In the same way, the Word of God became incarnate without being separated from the Father and the Holy Spirit. But it cannot be said that the Father and the Holy Spirit also became flesh. Timotheus gives other examples for the defense of the Trinity. According to him, the word, without being separated from the soul and mind, is clothed in sound through elements such as air and so on. But it cannot be said that the mind and soul are dressed in sound clothes. No one says that I listened to so-and-so's soul or mind. He says that he heard the word of so and so. It is not far from the mind and soul, and it is not separated from them. According to him, the Word of God, by becoming incarnate, is not separated from the Father and the Holy Spirit. At the same time, it cannot be said that the Father and the Holy Spirit became incarnate together with the word.[61] In response to Caliph Mahdi's words, "If you accept the Torah, it says that there is one God," Timotheus replied, "We already believe in one God. When we say trinity, we do not believe in three gods. There is one God and Trinity. The trinity is not in the divinity, but in the uknums. There is only one divinity."[62]

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[60] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye,* 34-35.
[61] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 36-37.

[62] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 46.

Ammar al-Basri (d. 850), one of the writers of the Eastern Church, played a very important role in the formation of Arabic Christian literature and theological terms during the Abbasid period. 850) attempted to defend Christian theology against Muslim theologians in his *Kitāb al-Masā'il wa'l-Ajwiba,* which he presented to Caliph al-Ma'mun (813-833), and his later *Kitāb al-Burhān fi'd-Din 'ala Siyakat al-Tadbiri al-Ilāhī*. The first work deals with the issues of God and creation, the four Gospels, trinity and the incarnation, which were the subject of debate between Muslims and Christians. The works of Ammar al-Basri

It is considered to be the first Arabic example of a systematic theological work that was put forward as the most comprehensive defense of the Christian faith in the IXth century.[63] Basri states that the existence of the universe, the order that exists in it, and the order in human existence, which is a small example of this universe, point to the existence of God. After expressing Plato's and Aristotle's arguments about God's existence and unity, such as the first cause, order, etc., he states that all religious traditions implicitly agree on God's existence and unity. In this regard, he states that even pagans recognized the existence of a single God above the idols they worshipped.[64] Stating that the Trinity is a true explanation of tawheed, Ammar al-Basri, in order to understand it correctly, first of all, wants to reveal the fallacy of what Muslims understand by one and only God. According to him, Muslims depict God as a living and speaking being without using the words "life" and "kalām/nutk". When the attribute of life is attributed to someone who lives and the attribute of speech is attributed to someone who speaks, it is understood that this person lives and speaks. If these two attributes are taken away from him, it becomes clear that he does not live and cannot speak. Because these attributes are essential attributes and a person can only exist with these attributes. Since animals do not have the attribute of speech in their essence, they cannot speak. But since human beings have speech and life in their essence, they are called living and speaking beings. Therefore, first of all, God has life and speech.

[63] Michael, *Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 31-39.
[64] Mikhail, *Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 351-352; Sako, *Hivārat Mesiḥiyya-Islamīyya*, 72.

The existence of God's attributes must be accepted. According to him, if God has these two attributes, then the question arises whether these attributes are present in His eternal divinity or whether they are added to His divinity as incidental attributes. Basri says that if these two attributes are not accepted as eternal and eternal in God's essence, then God will resemble an idol that is lifeless and cannot speak. According to him, when Christians say that God exists eternally and eternally with the two essential attributes of life and speech, they mean that God the Father lives and speaks. God's attribute of life corresponds to the Holy Spirit and the attribute of speech corresponds to Christ. In this way, Basri identifies these two essential attributes with the two elements of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit (the attribute of life) and the Son (theology/nature/wisdom). Therefore, according to him, Christians do not speak of the existence of three separate divine essences, nor do they mean a physical sonship when they speak of the Son. Basri uses the analogy of the sun, which we have quoted before, to explain the two essential attributes of the one substance. According to him, trinity does not cancel tawhid and tawhid does not cancel trinity; on the contrary, both concepts support each other. He also answers a possible question about why only these two attributes are taken as the basis, although God possesses many other attributes besides life and kalām. According to him, these two attributes are inherent in essence and substance. Without them, the essence or substance cannot exist. These attributes are the "distinguishing attributes" that distinguish one substance from another substance. Apart from these, there are many other attributes such as hearing, sight, compassion, generosity, and so on, and a being can also have opposite attributes. It may not hear as it can hear, it may forgive as it can forgive. When one of these attributes is absent, this does not change that essence. The deaf person remains a human substance. Therefore, according to him, except for these two attributes, attributes such as justice, compassion, generosity, kindness, goodness, mercy, forgiveness, etc. cannot be accepted as essential attributes of the substance of God. Basri argues that these attributes can be attributed to the word (wisdom-intellect), which is an essential attribute, because they are actions. According to him, actions can

undergo change due to their nature. For example, God

When he shows mercy to people, he is described as merciful; but when people do wrong, then this attribute changes and the attribute of justice (punishment) is manifested. Therefore, such changeable attributes cannot be attributed to his substance and essence. In conclusion, according to Basri, only the attributes of life and kalām are unique; without them, substance and essence cannot exist. Since all other attributes are subject to change, it is not correct to define God with attributes that are subject to change. All other attributes except the attributes of life and kalām depend on the basic qualities of these two essential attributes.[65]

Ammar al-Basri believes that the Muslim perception of the Trinity as consisting of three separate persons stems from a lack of understanding of the concepts of person and uknum. According to him, the concept of person in the Muslim perception refers to each body that is limited in all its dimensions among the bodies that are equal to it. After stating that the Nestorian Church called the concept of person in Syriac as knoma (uknum), Basri defines the words substance, force, accident and uknum and tries to explain that uknums, which are the elements of trinity, cannot be called persons. Accordingly, substance refers to universal entities such as human, fire, water, etc. Potency is the power that substance possesses. Examples include speech in human beings, heat in fire, and humidity in water. The faculty exists with the essence and essence of the substance. An accident in substance is like whiteness in snow or blackness in pitch. The uknum in substance is like an actual human being like Moses and Dawud among humans with their body and soul, or like Gabriel among angels with his special uknum. According to him, one of these is distinguished from the others by its uknum. Except for these four types, there is no existence, and all the existents and particulars are attributed to these four types. Of these, the general substance and the particular uknum exist on their own. Forces and accidents, on the other hand, cannot exist on their own, but they can only exist together with the substance and the uknum. According to Basri, in this respect, the three elements of the Trinity should not be regarded as three separate substances or persons, but as three separate uknum,

[65] Michael, *Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 372-380.

It is the most appropriate way to understand God. Basri calls the essential attributes that exist in the substance of God as uknum. According to him, the fact that Muslims do not have such a word (the concept of knoma) makes it difficult to understand the Trinity. This is because the uknum is not an independent person, but a unique property that exists perfectly and on its own without the need for anything else in the substance's existence.[66]

Abu'l Faraj Abdullah b. Tayyib (d. 1043), a physician, philosopher, jurist and important Christian theologian of the period, who was also the secretary to the Nestorian catholicos, contributed to the theological debates between Muslims and Christians with his various works. Since he was the patriarchal secretary of the Eastern Church, Ibn Tayyib's teachings should be recognized as the official views of the church. In his work *Al-Maqālaat al-Sālisa li'sh-Shaykh Abī al-Faraj 'Abdullah b. Tayyib fi't-Teslis wa't-Tawhid*, he tries to explain the trinity belief based on the arguments of Ammar al-Basri. Ibn Tayyib begins with the definition of substance and the uknums. According to him, the church teaches that God is a substance that is characterized by three attributes and three uknums. The substance refers to God's essence, and the attribute refers to the meanings[67] present in this essence, namely fatherhood, sonship, and emanation. When the essence comes together with the attribute of fatherhood, the identity of the Father emerges; when it comes together with the attribute of sonship, the identity of the Son emerges; and when it comes together with the attribute of emanation, the identity of the Holy Spirit emerges. In this respect, the Creator is manifested as one in essence (tawhid) and three in attributes (trinity). According to him, in terms of the coming together of the aspects of essence and attributes, it is manifested in the form of the three uknum. Thus, he states that uknums are formed as a result of the coming together of the essence with each of its three attributes separately. He tries to explain the fact that the Supreme Creator is one in terms of His essence and three in terms of His uknums with the example of Zayd. Accordingly, although Zayd is one in number, he is in three states

[66] Mikhail, *Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 375-377; Sako, *Hivārat Mesiḥiyya-Islamīyya*, 74-75.
[67] Ibn Tayyib uses the term ma "na or ma "na in the sense of that which is inherently present in the essence (antitype) as a synonym for a common definition and a hypostasis (uknum). Kuhn, *Defending*, 74.

can manifest. When Zayd is described as white, a writer and an engineer, his essence becomes a person who possesses these three attributes. When Zayd's essence is combined with each of these attributes separately, the same essence appears in different forms. The meaning of Zayd the white is different from Zayd the engineer. But Zayd remains Zayd in all three cases.[68] According to Ibn Tayyib, the attributes of the Creator are divided into two parts: those that are specific to His essence and those attributes that can be attributed to creatures other than His essence. The attributes specific to his essence are determined by the legislator (shari') and are three in number. Attributes such as power, generosity, wisdom, etc. are attributes that overflow from the Creator's grace and can also be found in creatures. According to him, these attributes enrich the intellect and understanding of the creatures. The attributes that are unique to the essence of the Creator and do not pass from Him to anyone else cannot be discovered by the human intellect. These attributes are fatherhood, sonship and emergence. The Creator, who is the Lawgiver, has revealed the knowledge of these attributes tawqifically (by divine command). Ibn Tayyib, without further explanation of these attributes, states that the reason why they were given to human beings providentially was because the Messiah's era was expected to come. Therefore, the Old Testament only directed people to affirm the essence itself (tawheed) without mentioning the attributes specific to the essence. The New Testament, on the other hand, gives knowledge of the attributes specific to the essence (trinity). According to him, only in the Hereafter will the truth of its mystery be revealed to us. In any case, the trinity is not given in detail in this world, and the human intellect does not have the capacity to fully access their knowledge. Therefore, the Lawgiver has devised a plan for the human intellect to comprehend it to the extent of its power and to attain knowledge of its truths. He considers this first statement, which contains the reason for the three attributes, to be revelation because they are tawfiq.[69]

According to Ibn Tayyib, it is impossible to think that the Creator, who exists as one, is devoid of reason and knowledge. When the attribute of knowledge is accepted, it is obvious that the essence possesses the power of knowledge. In this case, the essence

is knowledge, the scholar (knower), and the known.

[68] Kuhn, *Defending*, 246-247; Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 79.
[69] Kuhn, *Defending*, 251, 265.

(known) attributes in its essence. According to him, when these three attributes of the essence come together with the essence in different ways, knowledge emerges in three distinct senses. The substance (essence) whose attribute is knowledge must know. Therefore, the divine essence knows (ilm), knows itself (ʿālim), and is known (malum). Ibn Tayyib then applies these attributes to the other elements of the Trinity. According to him, the attribute of knowledge together with the essence points to fatherhood, and as a result, the Father emerges. When the attribute of knowledge comes together with the essence, it points to sonship and the Son emerges. The attribute of knowledge, when combined with the essence, is referred to as the Holy Spirit. He calls the union of each attribute of the essence with the essence as "sentence and muctemi". According to him, in conclusion, the essence has three attributes depending on its attributes, and these attributes are distinguished from each other by the attributes of fatherhood, sonship, and emergence (the Holy Spirit).[70] Ibn Tayyib, in response to an objection that the combination of essence with attribute would create a composite entity, states that there are two forms of composition: real and unreal. Accordingly, natural bodies composed of four elements are examples of real composition. Because they are mixed together and a new being has emerged. However, if the essence of the creator receives the aforementioned attributes, it can be called unreal composition. This is because it is a combination of adjective and attribute and cannot be considered a composition since the essence and the attribute are eternally together. Likewise, according to him, these attributes are not called accidents but properties because they are subordinate to the essence.[71] Ibn Tayyib states that among these attributes, the Father attribute is necessary and is the cause (illaq) and the other two attributes are the effect (malul).[72] According to him, even though the Father is mentioned as the cause, this should not be understood to mean that he is the cause of the existence of the Son and the Holy Spirit. For the essence is one in number and all three persons share the same essence. The Father (knowledge) is considered the cause of the Son (knowledge) and the Holy Spirit (knowledge) by virtue of being essence itself as its faculty. But in reality, since their substance is one, it

is not the cause of their body. Because all these are one

[70] Kuhn, *Defending*, 253.
[71] Kuhn, *Defending*, 269.
[72] Kuhn, *Defending*, 255.

They are realized in the essence/jewel. According to him, there is no priority between these three elements. If the direction of the overflow within the essence is the essence, this is the Son, and if the direction of the overflow is outward, this is the Holy Spirit.[73] According to Ibn Tayyib, who refers to the terms potency and action, the former refers to the potential power and the latter refers to the potential and actualized power. Actions are attributed not to the attributes but to the essence/essence and essence to which the attributes belong. Thus, each and every action of the intelligences is attributed to the substance. For, if it is not accepted in this way, then the action of each of the intelligences would be different from the action of the other intelligences.[74]

In his commentary on the "Nicene-Istanbul Creed", Mar Elia (975-1046), the metropolitan of Nusaybin, a prominent theologian of the Eastern Church, sets forth the three attributes of God, which he expresses in terms of three attributes and three mana. He defines God the Father as the substance of the creator from whom the word (logos) is born and from whom the Spirit emerges. To express this, he uses the example of the sun, which gives birth to light and radiates heat. According to him, "word" can also be called "wisdom" or "speech". The three are the same both in relation to God and in relation to our human substance. Just as the instinct of speech is inherent in the soul of each of us from the moment of our creation and the breathing of the soul into us, so the Lord Jesus is the word of God, and the eternal word exists in the essence and substance of God and is inseparable from Him. The Word is called "Son of God" because He was born of God. The Holy Spirit is of the same divine substance as the Word. According to him, the Fathers of the Church said about the unity of the Creator and the trinity of His attributes that He is one in essence and substance and three in attributes and meanings.[75] As can be understood from this, Elia positions the Father as the source of the creative substance in accordance with the Nicene-Istanbul Creed and the doctrine of the Cappadocian Fathers. He uses the terms word, speech, and wisdom rather than the term son, and uses the terms word and speech to refer to the Greek logos in Arabic.

[73] Kuhn, *Defending*, 267.
[74] Kuhn, *Defending*, 259, 261.
[75] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 86, 88, 90, 92, 96, 104, 138.

as their counterparts. He uses the term "speech" in the sense of intellect, the instinct to speak, and speech itself. These terms were deliberately chosen because of the negative image that the word "son" evokes in the minds of Muslims. Thus, he wanted to express that what is meant by the eternality of God's word is not a physical sonship, but rather the word (logos) refers to the intellect, speech, and wisdom that are eternally present in the substance of God. According to him, the word is the attribute of speech, reason and wisdom of God the Father eternally.[76]

Elia tries to express the difference and unity between God's essences with the analogy of water and fire. Accordingly, the substance of water has coldness and dampness. The coldness and dampness meant by the substance of water refers to water. Likewise, the substance of fire has light and heat, and these two refer to fire. This is because the attributes of coldness and dampness in water and the attributes of burning and illumination in fire are substances, not accidents. If one of the two attributes of either of them is separated from its substance, which is water or fire, then it is neither complete water nor complete fire. On the basis of this syllogism, Elia states that the eternal speech is in the essence of God, is in his substance, and is not separated from him. He then says, "For God can never be devoid of speech. A believer in God cannot conceive of Him at any time being devoid of His speech, which is wisdom. His word is of his essence and substance. Therefore, like the example of water and fire, He (the word) is inevitably His Son."[77] Mar Elia does not apply these propositions he uses for the Son to the Holy Spirit in detail. For him, the Spirit overflows from the Father as heat overflows from the sun. The Spirit has a life-giving character. That is why God is expressed as life. This quality of life and bestowal of life is in the essence and substance of God. Mar Elia utilized the Sunnite theologians' thought on the divine attributes and applied it to the explanation of the Trinity.

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[76] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 55-56.
[77] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 90, 92.

According to him, essence or attributes are essential and substantial. This means that they are essential (substantial) entities that define essence and substance. Without them, substance and essence are imperfect.[78] In Elia's exegesis, the trinitarian proposition is understood to mean "God is intellect and life" or "God is intellect (word-wisdom) and life". The God-word/wisdom/intelligence/wisdom-life proposition, while it looks good in dialog with Muslims, carries various risks for Christians. Elia defines the attributes (hassa), which the Cappadocian Fathers call idom, together with the hypostasis (knoma). In this case, first, the three hypostasis are simply the three attributes (hassa) and attributes of God. Second, the Father is identified as the source of the Trinity along with the divine substance. But at the same time, without further explanation, the Father is also considered as one of the three attributes and characteristics. This leads to confusion between the two groups of attributes (hassa). On the one hand, these attributes are qualities that define the substance of God and are common to all divine hypostases, and on the other hand, they appear as attributes of the hypostasis that define each hypostasis and specify their differences. Here, Elia did not distinguish between substance (essence) and hypostasis (essential attributes) like the Muslim theologians. According to Muslims, this group of God's attributes belongs to substance and is therefore defined as the substance of God. With regard to the other group of attributes, especially those related to God's acts, Elia uses the term hypostasis. Consequently, Elia runs the risk of applying the Islamic doctrine of the attributes of God to his interpretation of the doctrine of trinity.[79] Another interpretation Elia makes by taking into account the Muslim perception of the Trinity is about God's act of creation. According to this interpretation, God does not create by action or movement. He creates only by word. Implicitly, according to Islam, God creates by "kun feyekun" , that is, by word and speech.

[78] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 56.
[79] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 57.

creation. In this way, he is trying to show that God accomplished the act of creation through Jesus Christ, His Word (logos).[80]

Another important work of Mar Elia in which he explains his views on the Trinity is his work known as *Kitāb al-Majālis*. This work consists of the minutes of seven sessions (majlis) of discussions with the Marwanid vizier Abu'l-Qasim al-Maghribi (d. 1027), prepared by Elia. Based on the common principle in both religion and philosophy that the universe has a cause and is governed by it, and the consensus that this cause is a self-existent being (qaim bi nafsihi), Elia argues that God is substance.[81] According to him, the substance of God is alive (hayy) with the attribute of life and intelligible with the attribute of speech. The fact that substance has life and is intelligent is a principle that must be accepted logically.[82] But speech should not be understood as Muslims understand it. Elia says that Muslims refer to the sound produced by the interaction of the tongue with the air. According to him, for Christians there are two kinds of speech: the speech of the voice and the speech of the intellect. While the speech of the voice is a speech that can only be found in mortal bodies, the speech of the intellect is a power that resides in the soul (spirit) and with it knowledge, wisdom, wisdom, and perception emerge. This speech is found in beings such as angels and God. Human beings have both kinds of speech because they are composed of a material body and an immortal soul. Since God is incorporeal and immortal, His speech is only the speech of reason and wisdom. The attributes of life and speech are eternally present in God. If these two attributes are not considered eternal, God cannot exist.[83] In response to Wazir al-Maghribi's objection that these two attributes are eternal with God, Elia responds as follows:

> "Among Muslims, the Ahl al-Sunnah believe that God is life and life, knowledge and knowledge, power and power, and speech and speech. If Christians believe that God is life and God is speech

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[80] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 58.
[81] Shameri, *Majalisu Mar Iliyya*, 61. Elia used the term kyana in other works because of the drawbacks of using the term jawhar in dialog with Muslims. See Elias of Nisibis, *Maqalah fi Ma "na Kalimatay Kiyan wa Ilah*, ed. Samir Khalil Samir, "Un traitê nouveau d'Elie de Nisibe sur le sens des mots Kiyaân et Ilâh,"

Parole de l'Orient 14 (1987), 133-153.
[82] Shameri, *Majalisu Mar Iliyya*, 64.
[83] Shameri, *Majalisu Mar Iliyya*, 64-66.

> If they have fallen into shirk by saying that God is life, knowledge, power and kalām, then the Ahl al-Sunnah have fallen even further into shirk by saying that God is life, knowledge, power and kalām. In fact, Muslims are believers when they say these things and Christians are believers when they say that God is life and speech.[84] There is a difference between God being alive with life and intelligent with speech and God being only alive and intelligent. In this respect, when we say that God is self-existent [zāt] and that He is alive and intelligent, we are referring to three principles [meani]: Zāt, speech and life. We call speech the word. Because there is no speech other than the word and no word other than speech. Likewise, we call life the soul. For there is no life without spirit and no spirit without life. Since the essence of the Creator is not an accident and a composition, his speech [word] and his life [spirit] are not accidents and composites. Therefore, these two are essences on a par with the essence in terms of being substance and eternal... According to Aristotle's Categories, every being that is not an accident is called either a general [amm] substance or a particular [hass] uknum. Therefore, since essence, word, and soul are not three accidents and three general substances, it is correct that they are called the three uknum. The essence is the cause for the word to be born and the soul to appear. Essence corresponds to the Father, the word to the Son, and life to the Holy Spirit."[85]

Elia's understanding of the Trinity is compatible with the view of attributes and uknum of previous theologians. In short, God's essence, which is a substance, has the attributes of life and speech.[86] One of the interesting dialogues between Mar Elia and the Wazir al-Maghribī is his comment on the Christians who are and are not the followers of monotheism. According to him, the Melkites (supporters of the Council of Chalcedon), Jacobites and Nestorians are monotheists, while the Marcionites, Deuxanians, Manichaeans and Tritheists are polytheists.[87] Since Elia published his works after the approval of his contemporary Adullah b. Tayyib, the secretary of the Catholicos, his views reflect the theological position of the Eastern Church.[88]

Elia II (1111-1131), the patriarch of the Nestorian Church in the early XIth century, reiterated the church's traditional theses about God and the Trinity. According to this

God, who is one, has three attributes: eternal, eternal, and natural. These three attributes are

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[84] By saying that the attributes of life and speech are eternal, Elia wanted to demonstrate the divinity of these attributes in the context of trinity. The Muslim theologians do not give attributes separate attributes separate from the essence and do not see them as separate independent entities. For a comparison of the views of Muslim theologians and Mar Elia, see M. Nesim Doru, "The Importance of Iliya of Nusaybin in Syriac Thought and the Evaluation of His View of God in His Work "Kitabu "l-Majālis" from the Perspective of Islamic Philosophy and Theology", *Milel ve Nihal* 8/2 (2011), 65-70, 73-79.
[85] Shameri, *Majalisu Mar Iliyya*, 66-68.
[86] Shameri, *Majalisu Mar Iliyya*, 93.

[87] Shameri, *Majalisu Mar Iliyya*, 79-80.
[88] Kuhn, *Defending*, 39.

There is no other attribute for the Creator except that of eternity. He creates because He is eternal, gives life to His creatures because He is alive, and gives speech (speech/intelligence/wisdom) to His creatures because He is intelligent. It is not permissible for Him to be alive without a soul and to speak without speech. Therefore, he has spirit and speech. These two attributes exist eternally with him. According to him, it is necessary to believe in three essences in a substance. One does not precede the other: Eternity, life and speech. Elia II states that Christians call speech the word and life the spirit. The one God is eternal with word and spirit. The essence is called the Father; the word, the Son; and the life, the Spirit. According to him, the deity is not meant when we say the eternal, the vital, and the natural uknumu. All three are called the one and only deity. The name deity is used for the general substance. Each of the three entities cannot be called the creator. On the contrary, the creator is one. Just as the three attributes do not nullify the essence that is one, the three attributes do not nullify the essence that is one.[89]

The most compact work written in summary form on the official creed of the Eastern Church is *Marganitha* (Pearl), written in 1298 by "Abdisho" Bar Brikha, Metropolitan of Nusaybin and Armenia, at the request of Patriarch Mar Yahballaha III (d. 1318).[90] In this work, heavy theological issues are expressed in a clear and understandable manner. In fact, while the works written during the Islamic period were mostly prepared as a defense of Christianity against Muslims, "Abdisho" wrote his work for Nestorians. Therefore, he draws attention to the points where they differ from other Christian sects rather than Muslims. In the first part of his work, "Abdişo" deals with issues such as the existence of God and the Trinity. According to him, God exists eternally and the universe is immaterial, created and transient. According to him, the divine apostle, the treasure of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual philosopher Paul, by the power of the Holy Spirit: "Let those who desire God and seek him find him among his creatures and make him manifest."[91]

[89] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 84.
[90] Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 1-3.
[91] Acts, 17/27.

In his words, he revealed wonderful discoveries that contain the principles of theology. The artist is known by his work and the scholar by his deeds. According to "Abdisho", the fact that the universe is an afterthought, that it was created and had a beginning in time, is evident from the fact that it is composite, ordered and harmonious, both universal and particular. There is a unifier, an organizer and a harmonizer for all inkb, orderly and harmonious beings. The evidence that bears witness to the fact that it is a composition is that it is collectively composed of various parts. All its parts are composed of matter and forms. The movers in it are also visible and invisible composite beings. According to him, the most conclusive proof for this is human existence, which is itself a small world and in which everything in it is in harmony. The human being is a small image of the harmony and order of the whole universe and all creatures. That this universe is highly organized is evident from the marvelous order in the sky, the stars, the four elements (air, water, fire and earth) and the plants, trees, minerals, various animals and human beings that emanate from them. All this astonishing order is beyond human wisdom and knowledge.

According to "Abdisho", based on these proofs, the early philosophers said that the first movement pointed to an originator, and so this sequence continued until they reached the knowledge of the first cause. According to him, by this they confessed the good (salah), the wise (hakim), and the omnipotent. He is good because He created the universe without any cause. He is wise because the universe He created is in harmonious harmony. He is omnipotent because He has the power to bring together disparate elements in complete harmony. "Abdişo" states that this universe is determined by the quality of bodies and souls and the quality of shapes, dimensions and measurements. According to him, the intellect can ask: "Why is it not more or less, higher or lower?" In response to such a question, when we try to learn the reason for the existence and continuity of the shapes, images, and dimensions of the universe as a whole or of any part of it;

He says that there is no other answer except the will and knowledge of the Creator. For it is He who created the universe out of nothing and keeps it in a certain order.[92]

After presenting his thoughts on the unity of God and the creation of the universe, "Abdişo" touches upon the unity of God and the fact that there cannot be other gods along with Him. According to him, since it is not possible for more than one god to have a will that is perfect, unchanging and equal to his essence, there must be only one creator of the universe. Therefore, if it is thought that there is more than one God, the following three possibilities arise: First, these gods would be equal in nature and attributes. In this case, since there is no difference between them and there are no different types of them, these gods cannot be said to be more than one (qisrat). In the same way, it is impossible to conceive of two black beings who are equal to each other in every respect and have no attribute that distinguishes one from the other. Second, these gods differ from each other in nature and attributes. In this case, they are opposite beings and one destroys the other. As a matter of fact, it is not possible for a perfect action to be realized when there are two opposite causes (reasons for existence). Third, these gods would be equal in nature (essence) but different in attributes. In this case, each god would have a special kind that is different from the other gods that are similar to them. However, they all become a composite being that is composed of what they are equal and what they differ from. In this case, each composite being is created and has a creator and a maker. In other words, these gods would be both created and creator. Such a thing is not possible. Thus, according to him, the statement that "Our God, the Lord, is one Lord"[93] and likewise the statement that "Although there are many gods and lords in heaven and earth, our God is one"[94] are true.[95] Concerning God's eternality, "Abdisho" states that every being is either eternal or temporal, and that for the temporal there is a

[92] Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 5.
[93] Repetition of the Law, 6/4.
[94] 1 Corinthians 8/5-6.
[95] Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 6.

He says that he is the cause and creator, and that these things preceded his existence. According to him, every pure and uncorrupted intellect affirms that there is no cause and creator for the first cause and creator. This is quite clear. In this case, it becomes clear that the eternal being is the creator, is above time, and creates time.

After stating that time is the counting of the movements of bodies, "Abdişo" says that God is the cause of everything and that there is no beginning for Him. According to him, that which has no beginning has no end, and between these two opposites there are higher names such as truth, light, life, salah, sovereignty and omnipotence.[96] According to him, the eternal God cannot be perceived through reason and the senses. Only objects (material) and accidents can be perceived with the senses. This is because every body is a composite entity that fills a void in space and has a certain limit. All these attributes are inconsistent with "being-God" who is not an accident. This is because an accident does not exist with its essence. For this, it needs a substance. In things that can be perceived with the intellect, the intellect can only attain knowledge of the dimensions that constitute the limits of their parts and distinguish them from their counterparts. In this way, it knows and limits them. According to him, being finite and limited is alien to God's nature. The intellect cannot reach the dimensions and limits of His knowledge. The divine nature cannot be comprehended by the intellect. The intellect cannot know more than just knowing that "existence - God" exists. According to "Abdisho", when it is said that God is invisible to the eye, not ink, incapable of pain or change, it is not saying what He is, but only what He is not.[97]

After explaining the existence and unity of God, "Abdisho" moves on to the subject of trinity and tries to explain it in the context of the classical view of the Nestorian Church through divine attributes and attributes. Accordingly, every being is either a material body and has accidents, is subject to change, and consists of things that are opposed to each other, or it is not a body and is free from all accidents and changes.

God is not a body and

[96] Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 6.
[97] Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 6-7.

It is unlimitedly free from material attributes. According to him, the ancient philosophers were unanimous in naming what is free from matter and its attributes as "intellect-nous". That which is free from material attributes can only fully comprehend its own essence. For its essence is self-evident and known to it; there is no obstacle for it to recognize its own essence. Accordingly, whoever knows his essence, he is alive. God is sovereign and hayy. He who is sovereign knows with wisdom; he who is hayy is hayy with life. "Abdişo" expresses this as the secret of the prostrate Trinity and the nature confessed by the Church. For him, reason, wisdom and life are three attributes (hassa). Intellect is named "Father" and is the Father. For he is the cause of all things and the first. Wisdom is called "Son" and is the one who is born. For he was born of reason and through him all things were created. Life is called the "Holy Spirit" and is the originator. For there is no other Holy Spirit but him. "Abdisho" states that according to the authoritative commentators, it is impossible for the soul to undergo change. According to him, as John the son of Zebedee said about theology: "In the beginning was the Word" and likewise "Life was the light of men".[98]

"Abdisho" says that the nafs al-natika has three powers: intellect, speech and life, and that they are not three but one. According to him, in the same way, three should be conceived in one and one in three.[99] He likens this to the sun being one with its sphere, light and heat. He brings Paul's words "Christ is the light of the glory of the Father and the image of his substance"[100] and "Christ is the power and wisdom of God"[101] as evidence for this. According to him, these three attributes (hassa) belong to substance and there is never any accident for the substance of God. For this reason, they are called uknum and are not considered as forces belonging to accident. This is because these three attributes (hassa) do not bring about any change or change in the nature of God, whose essence is intellect, wisdom, and life. According to him, in the Old Testament: "God created man in our image, in our likeness.

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[98] John, 1/1-4.
[99] Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 7.
[100] Hebrews, 1/3.

[101] 1 Corinthians, 1/24; Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 8.

Let us create"[102] The use of the plural tense in this sentence points to the Trinity. In Isaiah, the angels of Seraphim blessing the name of the Lord three times points to the existence of three Persons in one nature.[103] David's statement, "By the word of God the heavens were created, and by his breath (spirit) were created all that is in them"[104] points to the same meaning.[105]

From all these, it is understood that the Eastern Church interpreted the understanding of the Trinity within the framework of the Cappadocian Fathers, the Antiochene school, Aristotle and Plato's theories on being, and especially the Neo-Platonic classification of "One, Reason, and the Soul of the Realm". In the context of this view, which was formulated as three uknum in one divine nature, the one God and his three manifestations were tried to be explained. While in the early periods, the three divine essences were dealt with as individual manifestations of the one divine substance, in the Islamic period, they were tried to be dealt with together with the subject of divine attributes. While the elements of the Trinity were sometimes considered as three eternal attributes: essence, word/wisdom/intelligence and life, they were sometimes interpreted as God's essence and his two attributes of word/wisdom/intelligence and life. Accordingly, these two attributes, along with the essence, are manifested as three particular uknums within the general divine substance. While the three uknums are one and the same in the divine substance and essence, they are distinguished from each other by their specific characteristics. The theologians of the Eastern Church, who emphasized the unity of God, also stated that the unity of God can only be understood through the Trinity. For God's essence can only be a true God with the attributes of word/wisdom/intelligence and life.

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[102] Genesis, 1/26.
[103] "Holy, holy, holy, holy is the God of hosts". Isaiah, 6/3.

[104] Psalms, 33/6.
[105] Mar "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 8.

4. THE SON, JESUS CHRIST (CHRISTOLOGY)

In the Christian tradition, issues related to the identity of Jesus Christ are dealt with within the science of Christology. Christology, formed by the combination of the Greek words Christos (Christ) and logia (logia), is a branch of science that examines the person of Jesus Christ, who embodies divine and human natures, and his actions that provide salvation.[106] In the history of Christianity, first at the Council of Nicaea, Jesus Christ was recognized as having the same essence as God, and then at the Council of Constantinople, the deity of the Holy Spirit was recognized and the trinity belief was officially accepted. However, this did not end the theological debates among Christians and brought about even greater debates and divisions over how these two natures were united in the person of Jesus Christ, who was both God and man. In the context of Christological debates, many issues were discussed, such as how Jesus, who was both God and man, became a single person, how the different wills of the divine and human natures were manifested in the same person, to which nature and how can the actions of this person be attributed, what is the relationship between human actions and divine nature or divine actions and human nature? Christological debates flared up towards the middle of the Vth century within the framework of the title Theotokos (God-bearer) used for Mary, and debates on how the divine and human natures were united in the person of Jesus Christ were tried to be resolved at the Councils of Ephesus (431, 449) and Chalcedon (451). As a result of these debates, the Eastern Church developed separately from other churches with the cryptological view it adopted. "Abdişo" expresses the views in which the Eastern Church differed from other Christian churches and the development of this process from his own perspective as follows:

> "After the Apostles there were various divisions within the Church. With the organization of the Council of Nicaea, the true faith was established and heretics were expelled from the Church. About a century later there was a dispute between Cyril and Nestorius over the person of the Incarnation. The belief in the Trinity, as it had been accepted at the Council of Nicaea, was accepted by all Christians and was not disputed. Accordingly, each element of the Trinity is equal in sovereignty, authority and will.

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[106] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 579.

were considered equal and of equal substance. In the same way, Christ was recognized as fully God and fully man. The dispute now arose over the form of the union and the expressions used to describe it. Cyril argued that Mary should be called "Mother of God" and wrote twelve anathemas excommunicating anyone who made any distinction between divine and human natures after the union [incarnation]. Nestorius rejected him, saying that this was not true. ... In his teaching Cyril excommunicated anyone who separated the divine nature of Christ from his human nature. The apostles and prophets had distinguished the nature of this disputed person [Jesus]. ... After this the Church split again. Some supported Nestorius, others were dragged behind Cyril. The two sides mutually excommunicated each other. So there was more division, killing, exile, imprisonment and persecution than ever before. This went on and on until Emperor Marcion came to the throne and decided that the Council of Chalcedon should be held and the right side should be revealed. He wanted to unite the whole Church under one statement of faith. At this ecumenical council [of Chalcedon] it was affirmed that in Christ there are two natures, each retaining its own particularity, and likewise two wills. They excommunicated anyone who spoke of a mixture that destroyed both natures. Since in Greek there is no distinction between the words knoma [hypostasis] and person, they confessed a knoma in Christ. Cyril's followers were not satisfied with the two natures [kyana] and Nestorius' followers were not satisfied with the one knoma. Some were forced to accept it, while others continued to hold their views. Eventually Christianity split into three sects: First: Egyptian Copts and Abyssinians whose patriarchs confessed one nature [kyana] and one knoma in Christ in the tradition of Cyril, and were called Jacobites after the Syriac teacher James, who made a great effort to spread Cyril's teachings among the Syriacs and Armenians. The second sect: Those who accepted the doctrine of two natures [kyana] and one knoma and were called Melkites [Malkaya] because they were forced to accept it by the emperor. This sect was accepted by the Romans, that is, the Franks, the Greeks and the northern peoples who were their neighbors, such as the Russians, Alans, Circassians, Asians, Georgians. The Franks differed from the others in that they said that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son and that they used unleavened bread for the Eucharist. These two sects were also

They also use the expression "Mother of God". But the Jacobites added the words "crucified for us" to the liturgy. Third sect: They confess that in Christ there are two natures [kyana] and two knomas, one Son, one will and one authority. These were called Nestorians."[107]

In this work, written in the late eighteenth century, "Abdisho" summarized the Eastern Church's Christological formula as "two natures and two knomas in the one person of Christ". In this Christological formula, the phrase that indicates the distinctive feature of the Eastern Church is the phrase "two knomas/hypostasis". However, in the Eastern Church, the cryptological expression of the two knomas is actually the same as Abdisho's statement that the cryptological discussions began

[107] "Abdisho" Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 14-16.

and was not used in the synods of the Eastern Church in the first period of its intensification and before 612. It was first mentioned in 562-563 by the delegation of the Eastern Church that participated in the discussions in the presence of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian (Iustinianus) (527-565)[108] and only in 612 was it adopted as the official crystallological formula of the Eastern Church.[109] In this case, it is important to understand what the cryptological formula of the Eastern Church was during the period from the beginning of the cryptological debates until 612, and how it gained an official identity in the form of the doctrine of the two knommas by following a course of development. However, before discussing this process, we need to briefly examine the cristological debates that took place within the Roman Empire and the positions of the parties, and we need to focus on the terms used in these cristological debates and the meanings of the Syriac equivalents of these terms and the context in which they were used.

4.1. Crystallological Terms

In addition to the socio-political and cultural background, one of the most important factors complicating the christological debates that emerged in the Christian world in the V and VI centuries was the different meanings that the parties attached to the technical Greek terms such as "ousia", "hypostasis", "prosopon" and "physis", which formed the framework for these debates, and the different meanings that the same term could evoke for the parties. When these debates were conducted in Syriac instead of Greek, the situation became even more complicated for two reasons. First, the Syriac terms used as standard equivalents of these terms had a different range of meanings than their Greek counterparts. Second, from the late Vth century to the VIIth century, the Syriac

translation technique, which reveals subtle differences in meaning, and many of the Greek original

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[108] This document was first unearthed in 1969. See Antoine Guillaumont, "Justinien et l "Église de Perse", *DOP*, 23/24 (1969/1970), 62; Luise Abramowski, "Martyrius-Sahdona and Dissent in the Church of the East", ed. Ch. Jullien, *Controverses des chrestiens dans l "Iran sassanide*, Cahiers de Studia Iranica 36 (Paris 2008), 17-18.

[109] Synodicon Orientale, 575; Sebastian P. Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 142.

The Turkish translation was influenced by a rigorous translation approach that aimed to reflect detail. This led to a revision of older translations and the application of more formal equivalents of technical terms.[110] This confusion of meaning led the parties to adopt different crystallological formulas, further deepening the divide. In the following, the use of technical terms in crystallology in the Western (Latin) and Eastern (Greek) worlds will be explained first, followed by the corresponding technical terms used in the Syriac world.

Greek	Latin	Syriac	Arabic	Turkish
Hypostasis	Substantia	Knoma (Kyana Ihidaya)	Uknum (al-jewelu "l-hâss)	Uknum
Prosopon	Persona	Parchopa	Person	Person
Physis	Natura	Kyana (Kyana Gawanaya)	Nature (al-jawalu "l-"âmm)	Nature

Table 2: Terms used in crystallology

Ousia: A term derived from the participle of the Greek verb "to be, to exist". It refers to the dimension of a thing called its essence, substance and being. Used at the Council of Nicaea (325) to express that Jesus Christ has the same essence as God, the term was later used to express the unity of the three persons of the Trinity. The Cappadocian Fathers used the term to denote an essence and nature shared by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.[111] For the term ousia, the Eastern Church used the Syriac term "kyana" meaning nature or "ituta" meaning essence, substance. Accordingly, the term homoousisus is translated as "bar kyana" (son of the same nature) or "bar ituta" (son of the same substance).[112]

Hypostasis: The word means "underlying, foundation, support". It was used by Aristotle and the Neo-platonists to mean "the objective reality of something".

[110] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 126; "The christology of the Church of the East", 167.
[111] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 586, 593; Duygu - Akalin, *Introduction to Christology*, 46.
[112] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 131; "The christology of the Church of the East", 169.

This term was used synonymously with ousia by early Christians in the sense of "being" and "essential reality". Although the term hypostasis was gradually distinguished from ousia, the two terms were still used in a similar sense at the Council of Nicaea. However, the Cappadocian Fathers used it in the context of the Trinity as "three hypostasis (persons) in one ousia (essence)". The translation of hypostasis into Latin as "substantia/being" aroused suspicion in the West that the Easterners (Greeks) were Arianists or Tritheists, while the translation of the Latin term "persona" into Greek as "prosopon" caused the East to see Westerners as Sabellian. It was understood to mean prosopon (person) to denote the separate and distinct persons of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and was therefore often confused with the term prosopon. At the Council of Chalcedon, with the formula that Jesus Christ has two natures, a person (prosopon) and a hypostasis, the word hypostasis was given a meaning closer to the person (prosopon), while the Alexandrian school derived a meaning closer to the nature (physis) from this term.[113]

Prosopon (Person): This term literally means face and the mask used by stage actors in theater. In the Old Testament, it was used as the equivalent of the word "panim" meaning face. In theological and Christological debates, it came to be used as a substitute for the word "person" in the sense of a concrete individual. In Latin, it is translated as "persona" and Tertullian's expression of the Trinity as "three persons, one essence" has become widely accepted in the West. In the West, the term "persona" was used to denote the trinity in the Trinity and the single person of Jesus Christ in Christology, while the terms "natura" or "substantia" and later "essentia" were used to denote the unity in the Trinity and the duality in Christ. In the East (Greek), in contrast to the term "persona", a common essence or ousia shared by different individuals of the species,

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[113] J. M. Carmody, "Hypostasis", *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Second Edition*, ed. Thomas Carson & Joann Cerrito (Detroit: Thomson & Gale, 2003), 7/263; Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 240, 586; Duygu - Akalin, *Introduction to Christology*, 31.

The term hypostasis was used to mean a concrete individual with its own characteristics. Later, however, it was recognized that the Greek terms ousia and hypostasis and their corresponding Latin terms substantia and persona were equivalent. The phrase prosopon was used in Christology specifically to designate the one person of Jesus Christ with different natures. In this respect it is used in parallel with the Greek hypostasis and the Latin persona.[114]

Physis: It is a Greek term used as an equivalent of the Latin word "natura" (nature). It means the original form and nature of a thing and is used in philosophy especially to indicate the essence of a thing.[115] The term physis does not appear in the Old Testament, but it does appear in the New Testament.[116] This expression was used to designate divine and human natures.

In Syriac, the key terms used in cryptological discussions are "knoma", "parchopa" and "kyana". However, in the Syriac world, in the minds of East Syriac and West Syriac theologians who adopt diophysite and monophysite Christology, there is no consensus on which of these terms should be used to refer to exactly which of the Greek terms "hypostasis", "prosopon", "physis" and "ousia", which are used as their equivalents, and this leads to a confusion of meaning. For example, one side uses the term kyana (nature) to mean physis or ousia, while the other side uses the same term to mean hypostasis.

Parchopa: This term, which is the Syriac translation of the Greek term "prosopon" (person), has been used in different ways to explain Trinitarian theology and Christological doctrine. However, it s h o u l d be noted that it is only used for different meanings and purposes in the cryptological doctrine. Until 612, within the Eastern Church

knoma and two knomas because of the existence of two currents, "knoma-parschopa" and "two knomas".

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[114] M. J. Dorenkemper, "Person (In Theology)", *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Second Edition*, 11/148-149; A. M. Bermejo, "Person, Divine", *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Second Edition*, 11/151-152; Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 596; Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 31.
[115] S. O "flynn Brennan, "Nature (in philosophy)", *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Second Edition*, 10/208.
[116] M. J. Dorenkemper, "Nature (in theology)", *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Second Edition*, 10/211.

The terms parchopa are understood to have different metaphysical meanings.[117] Parchopa is generally used for the one person of Jesus Christ in whom the divine and human natures are united.

Knoma (Qnoma/Uknum): Knoma is a very important technical term used in the crystallology of the Eastern Church, from which word it is not entirely clear. It is sometimes thought to be related to the word "qum", which means "to stand up".[118] Knoma is regularly understood and translated as hypostasis in Syriac, but the term has a much wider range of meaning than hypostasis. Therefore, it is more appropriate to use knoma rather than hypostasis. This is especially important for understanding the "two knoma" doctrine that emerged in the sixth century and was a distinctive feature of this church. In the early Syriac literature it is used in various senses such as simply "own", "self", "self", "self", but it is rarely used in the sense of "person". However, the meaning of "person" here should not be understood as "person/person/prosopon" in the Christological context, as it does not refer to the Greek term "prosopon" meaning person.[119] As a translation of hypostasis, "knoma" first appeared in the Eastern Church in official documents at the Synod of Mar Achak in 486 to describe the three persons of the Trinity.[120] Until the Synod of Bishops in 612, it did not appear in official documents as a technical term used in Christology, but it began to gain importance in the discussions with the Monophysites during the sixth century. However, in order to fully understand the term "knoma" used by the Eastern Church in the crystallological formula, it is necessary to explain another term, "kyana", also used in the crystallological formula.

are available.

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[117] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 484, footnote 14; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 355.
[118] J. F. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching: A Fresh Examination of the Evidence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 220.
[119] For the use of the term Knoma in early Syriac literature, see Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching,* 220-232.
[120] *Synodicon Orientale*, 302.

Kyana: This is a Syriac word used in Greek for "physis", Latin for "natura" and Arabic for "nature", and it has two different meanings. The first one is abstract, universal and general in the sense that it encompasses all the elements of the members of a particular species and is called "kyana gawanaya". The second is real, concrete and individual, and is called "kyana ihidaya" or "knoma". The term kyana corresponds to the Arabic "al-jawal al-'âmm" and the Syriac "ituta gawanaya" in the first meaning and the Arabic "al-jawal al-hâss" and the Syriac "ituta ihidaita" in the second meaning. In the context of the first meaning mentioned above, this term was used as the equivalent of the Greek term "ousia" to denote the abstract and manifest divine nature, essence and substance in the Trinity, and as mentioned earlier, it was used in this sense in the expression "bar kyana", which corresponds to the term "homoousius". The term kyana is used in Christology in the context of the second meaning mentioned above to refer to the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ. According to the Christology of the Eastern Church, "kyana" has a general and abstract meaning for the common nature or substance/jewel that a species possesses, while "knoma" is an individual revelation or individual manifestation of this general and abstract nature/jewel. In other words, kyana means a general substance (ousia/kyana gawanaya) and abstract nature (physis), while knoma means an individual substance (ousia ihidaita) and concrete nature (kyana ihidaya). In this respect, knoma is regarded as an individual and concrete manifestation or appearance of kyana.[121] While kyana (nature) means what is common and common to all human beings, knoma (hypostasis) means what each human being is. While an actual human being possesses the kyanah (nature) of common humanity in terms of kyana (nature), at the same time his knoma (hyposatasis)

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[121] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifty to Early Seventh Centuries", 131; "The Christology of the Church of the East", 173-174; Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great* , 85-89; Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 29, 31-32; *Abauna "s-Surian*, 31; Emmanuel Delly, "Comment Expressing the View of the Chaldean Church Today on the Christological Controversy", *Syriac Dialogue: First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition*, (Vienna: 1994), 154.

Through this, as a concrete individual, he is recognized and distinguished from others who share this common nature.[122] According to Church tradition, in order for the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ to be fully revealed, his two natures (kyanas) must be recognized in conjunction with his two knomas. For in Christology, the value of the individual substance/nature, the knoma, is greater than the value of the common substance/nature, the kyanas.[123] This is often expressed as "two kyana (natures) and their knoma". In Christ, therefore, the two kyana (natures) specifically define the existence of his divinity and humanity, and accordingly the divine knoma is paralleled by the God Logos as the perfect God, and the human knoma is paralleled by the human Jesus as the perfect man. It should be emphasized that the term "human being" as used here is not considered to have a separate existence before the incarnation. This is because in the terminology of the Eastern Church the term "man" means (in the abstract) an individual human being and certainly not a private person.[124] In this case, deity is the kyanah of God; humanity is the kyanah of man. In the case of the person of the incarnate Christ, his divine dimension is the knoma, or personal manifestation of the kyanas of his divinity, and his human dimension is the knoma, or personal manifestation of his humanity.[125] However, this personal manifestation or individual revelation of the kyanas called knoma (which is not necessarily self-existent) is not a manifestation of the kyanas per se.[126] To put it briefly, in the tradition of the Eastern Church, kyana (nature) is an abstract notion, referring to the common nature and substance between the same genus or species. The term kyana (nature), used in the abstract and general sense of nature, does not mean exactly the same thing as the Greek physis (nature), which refers to the same nature. Knoma

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[122] Abramowski - Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts,* 2/107-108; Sako, *Abauna "s-Syriac*, 109.
[123] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 32.
[124] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifty to Early Seventh Centuries", 131.
[125] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 93.
[126] Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 103-104; "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 93.

(hypostasis), on the other hand, refers to the real and individual nature present in any being belonging to that species. The parchopa (prosopon) used for the person refers to the concrete and physical aspect, and the person (prosopon) is an independent entity.[127]

In the context of the different cristological formulas put forward in the Christological debates in the Christian world, it is necessary to briefly mention the different meanings that the parties attribute to the technical terms they use. The proponents of the Council of Chalcedon have formulated crystallological formulas as "two physis, one hypostasis, one prosopon", the Monophysites as "one physis, one hypostasis, one prosopon" and the Eastern Church (Diophysite) as "two kyana, two knoma (hypostasis) and one prosopon". The Eastern Church disagreed with the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon over the term hypostasis (knoma), and with the Monophysites over the terms physis and hypostasis. The term "kyana", the formal equivalent of "physis" and the traditional translation of "nature", was used in Syriac in the IVth and early Vth centuries as the equivalent of both "ousia" and "physis". In the cryptological debates of the VIth century, in the Eastern Church, kyana (nature) continued to be seen as more related to the term ousia than to prosopon (person), whereas in the Syriac Orthodox (Monophysite) tradition, ousia (essence/gem) and physis (nature) were sharply separated and physis was understood as more related to prosopon (person). This difference in usage is very clearly reflected in the translation practices of the VIth century in connection with the term homoousius. East Syriac writers normally translated homoousisus as "bar kyana" (son of the same nature) or "bar ituta" (son of the same substance) until the late V century. However, the West Syriac writers, with meticulous translation, began to translate it as "shawe b-ituta" or "shawe b-ousia" (co-substance).

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[127] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 19-20; *Abauna "s-Surian*, 109.

they began. Thus, they definitively separated the term kyana from the context of ituta/ousia (essence/jewel)[128] and physis/kyana and gave it the meaning of hypostasis/knoma.[129] Thus, while the Eastern Church used the term kyana (nature) to denote divine and human essence, substance, and nature, the Monophysites understood the term nature (physis) as hypostasis (knoma), which they associated with the person.[130] Therefore, the Eastern Church's expression "two knoma" was understood by them as "two persons". However, according to the Babai, with whom the "two knoma" view is mainly associated, knoma certainly does not have the meaning of hypostasis, which is self-existent. Since Christologically knoma can be understood by the existence of kyanas, Babai expressed his proposition as "two kyana and their knoma". For him, a knoma is an individual instance of a particular kyanas or a unique nature, while a kyana (nature) is abstract, i.e., divinity and humanity. Such a knoma does not necessarily exist independently, and this is certainly not the case with Christ: Here the knoma of the divine nature (divinity) is Christ's divine nature (divinity) and the knoma of the human nature (humanity) is Christ's human nature (humanity). The Babai emphasize on many occasions that these two knomas are united from the moment the only Son begins to fall into the womb.[131]

The term cnoma (hypostasis) is a very problematic Christological term because of the different meanings given to it by the Eastern Church, the pro-Chalcedonian Greco-Roman Churches and the opponents of the Council of Chalcedon (Monophysites). At the Council of Chalcedon, the formula that Jesus Christ had two natures (physis) in one prosopon (person) and one hypostasis was found to be illogical by both the Eastern Church and the Monophysites. According to the diophysite understanding of the Eastern Church, in this formula Christ had "two

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[128] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifty to Early Seventh Centuries", 131; "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 103-104; Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching*, 216-219.
[129] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 92
[130] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 109.
[131] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 173-174.

Although the truth is approached by accepting "physis" (kyana/nature), it is illogical to speak of "one hypostasis" when "two physis" (two natures/kyana) and "two knoma" (hypostasis), which are their individual manifestations, should be accepted. For the Monophysites, on the other hand, while it is correct to accept "one hypostasis" (knoma), the expression of "two physis" constitutes a contradiction.[132] For them, the term hypostasis has a meaning close to physis.[133]

Although the Eastern Church did not use the phrase "knoma" (hypostasis) in the sense of prosopon (person) in Christology, it was perceived as a person by the opponents of[134] and was accused of speaking of two persons in Christ with the expression "two knomas". This understanding has persisted for a long time and has survived to the present day due to the fact that some European translators have translated knoma with the word person/person. However, the translation of knoma as prosopon/person should be avoided and should be rendered as knoma without translation, taking into account the context used by the Eastern Church.[135] It is also important to note that it is not correct to agree with the view that the conflict between the Antiochian (diophysite) and Alexandrian (monophysite) schools regarding the technical terms used in theological and Christological discussions was mainly due to the attempt to express the same concepts with different terminology. It is necessary to take into account that the differences between the two schools are much deeper.

4.2. Christological Controversies in the Roman Empire

The Diophysite Antiochian tradition, in opposition to views that regard Jesus Christ as only God or only man, or partly God and partly man, sees Christ as simultaneously God and man.

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[132] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali,* 29-30. Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 100-101.
[133] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifty to Early Seventh Centuries", 131; "The Christology of the Church of the East", 167-168.
[134] J. F. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching*, 230-231.
[135] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 168; "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 103-104.

It is shaped by the need to assert that he is both fully God and fully man. In this respect, it emphasizes the divine and human nature in Jesus Christ, while at the same time maintaining a clear distinction between the divine and the human plane. This understanding has often led them to be accused of advocating the view of two sons or two Christs. According to Diodore of Tarsus, an important representative of this tradition, the God Logos is by nature the only son of God. Jesus, who was born of Mary (the human Jesus), is the son of David by nature, but he is considered the son of God by grace. Therefore, there are not two sons but only one son.[136] According to him, the son of Mary was a mortal being with human feelings. However, Christ's humanity became eternal after his resurrection from the dead.[137] He uses the images of royal purple, temple and servant to describe the relationship between Christ's divinity and humanity. Accordingly, the union of the two natures is realized not in a single essence and substance, but in a single worship. In his interpretation of the New Testament "Christ taking the form of a servant (demuta) from the form of God"[138] , he states that the God Logos takes the form of a human being in appearance; these expressions cannot be interpreted as "turning into a servant" or "turning into a human being". Although human nature is "servant", the hidden nature (divine nature) is considered like a human being because it is revealed and manifested in him.[139] According to Diadore, the (royal) purple (Christ's human nature) is worshipped because of the one who wears it (Christ's divine nature), the temple (human nature) because of the one who dwells in it (divine nature), the form of the servant because of the form of God, and the acquired/adopted (human nature) because of the one who acquires/adopts (divine nature). He speaks of the misunderstanding of one worship. According to him, if the one worship of Jesus Christ is understood to mean that there is one essence and substance (ousia) in him, this is blasphemy.[140] Antioch

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[136] John Behr, (ed. and trans. with a historical and theological Introduction), *The Case against Diodore and Theodore, Texts and their Contexts*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 192-193.
[137] Behr, *The Case against Diodore and Theodore*, 182-185.
[138] Philippians Letter, 2/7.
[139] Behr, *The Case against Diodore and Theodore*, 178-179.

[140] Behr, *The Case against Diodore and Theodore*, 238-241.

Theodore of Mopsuestia, the leading figure of the School, also made a clear distinction between the divine and human natures of Christ. In his commentary on the Nicene Creed, after the holy fathers' phrase "the only begotten Son", Theodore of Mopsuestia wrote "the firstborn of all creation". He adds that the first of these expressions refers to the divine nature in Christ and the second to the human nature. According to him, in a parchopa (prosopon/person), the two natures are united (naqiputa) in a way that cannot be dissolved. In this respect, the human being who is adopted by God, who wears it (human nature), has gained honor and glory.[141] It is clear from these statements that in Jesus Christ there are two natures and one parchopa (person). Since it is impossible to separate the form of the servant, which is accepted after the Incarnation because of the indissoluble unity, from the form of God, both natures share the same honor. In other words, although they are divided in terms of their natures, they are one in terms of worship. Because worship is indivisible. According to him, the God Logos dwelt in the human person, and thus the two were united in a person (parchopa) who was worshipped as a single object of glorification.[142] According to Theodore, if both natures (kyana) were identical in nature (both divine nature or both human nature), then one could speak of two sons and two lords according to the number of parchopa (persons). But since the divine nature resides in (shekinah) and is manifested through (shekinah) the human nature, the human nature receives honor and glory (kabod) and both natures are united in worship.[143] He interprets the phrase "became man/incarnated (inhominated)" in the Nicene Creed not as a change or transformation, but as an adoption and assimilation. According to him, Christ did not merely appear in human form by putting on the nature in which he was and lived. On the contrary, he is a real human being with all the attributes of human nature. Likewise, "the Logos became man and dwelt among us",

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[141] Mingana *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 37.
[142] Rompay, "Theodore of Mopsuestia", *GEDSH*, 402; Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 89-90.
[143] Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 90-91.

He states that it does not imply that the logos has undergone a change; it means that the logos has assumed human nature. In this respect, he distinguishes between the terms "transformed" and "assumed human nature". He used the formula "God Logos and assumed man" and insisted that the two natures form "One Son" and "One Lord" because they are united in one parchope.[144] *In On the Incarnation,* Theodore also states that the God Logos dwells in the human nature that he adopts (shekinah), that the two natures are united in a parchope, and that the adopted human nature receives the honor of the divine son (kabod) because of the complete union of the two natures, which retain their own characteristics.[145] The indwelling of the God Logos in the human nature (shekinah) and the consequent attainment by the human nature of the honor and glory of the God Logos (kabod) is a Christological proposition that the Mopsuestan often invokes.

Syriac texts on the Christology of the Nestorian Church dating back to the VIth century report that Mopsuestian used prosopon in two ways. Either prosopon is used to explain the hypostasis (knoma) and refers to something that each of us possesses, or it refers to the one who is given honor, glory and worship. Paul and Peter, for example, indicate each one's knoma and parousia, but the parousia of the Lord Christ means honor, glory and worship. Because God the Logos was manifested in humanity, the honor of his knoma caused him to unite with the visible. For this reason, the parchope (person) of Christ does not refer to the substance (ousia) of the two natures, but to the parchope (person) of honor, dignity, glory. For honor is neither nature (kyana) nor hypostasis (knoma). On the contrary, honor is the highest degree of dignity bestowed by virtue of manifestation (revelation). Therefore, purple clothes or nobility for the king

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[144] Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 73; F. A. Sullivan, "Theodore of Mopsuestia", *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 13/875.
[145] Metselaar-Jongens, *Defining Christ*, 34-36.

For the God Logos, in worship, it is the same (human nature) that he acquired from us in the first place, without separation, alienation, or interruption. Therefore, just as it is not natural for a king to have purple clothes, it is not natural for the God Logos to have a body. According to these texts, if one were to confess that the God Logos has a body by nature, it would be the incorporation of something foreign into the divine substance as a result of the addition of a nature and its transformation.[146] Theodore of Mopsuestia, in his commentary on the Nicene Creed, uses knoma in the Trinity, but not in the Christological context. However, in some Syriac translations of the eighth memra of his work *On the Incarnation, the* expression "one knoma" or "two knomas" is mentioned in Christ, while in others the term knoma is not mentioned, which has led to different opinions regarding his Christology and terminology. Although it is not possible to draw a reliable conclusion from the extant copies of the eighth memran, it seems closer to the truth that the Syriac translations in which the phrase "two knoma" appears were added by the translators. Therefore, it is not considered accurate to attribute the "two knoma" view to Theodore.[147]

It is clear from these accounts that Antiochian Christology makes a sharp distinction between transcendent divinity and material, mortal humanity. The divine and human natures of Christ retain their distinctiveness and are indissolubly united in one person of worship, Jesus Christ, without being transformed into each other. The human nature of Jesus Christ has a complete human nature, consisting of body, soul and mind. According to this tradition

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[146] Abramowski - Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts*, 2/106- 107.

[147]Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 174; Luise Abramowski, "Martyrius-Sahdona", 16-17; Gerrit J. Reinink, "Tradition and the Formation of the "Nestorian" Identity in Sixth- to Seventh-Century Iraq", ed. J.-W. Drijvers and J. Watt, *CHRC* 89.1-3, (Leiden 2009), 228-229. For a comparison of the two texts in which knoma (hypostasis) is added in the Syriac translation, although it is not mentioned in the original Greek text of Theodore, cf. Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 492. See also Metselaar-Jongens, *Defining Christ*, 41-43 for two comparative copies of the Eighth Memra in his work "On the Incarnation", which has led to various speculations about Theodore.

The humanity of Christ, homo assumptus (assumed/assumed man), was posthumously elevated to the heavenly angelic realm as a guarantee for the resurrection and salvation of all humanity. In this respect, the human nature of Christ must be absolutely preserved for salvation. In this case, the use of the title "Yaldat Alaha/God-bearer" for the Virgin Mary was considered inappropriate as it would obscure the humanity of Jesus Christ.[148] As a matter of fact, Nestorius, who belonged to this tradition, criticized the use of this title during his patriarchate in Constantinople, and this sparked the cryptological debate.

It should be noted that in Nestorius' *Heracleides' Bazaar*, translated from the original Greek into Syriac, it is quite difficult to understand the spirit of his writings. Because it is written in a style that is difficult to follow and is often repeated. The work seems to be rational rather than traditional. The first part confuses the modern reader, while the second part repeats the same things over and over again, leaving the reader confused because of its imprecise language.[149] This work is essentially an apologetic work and was written while Nestorius was in exile.[150] Looking at the technical terms used by Nestorius, it is understood that in the trinitarian formula of "in one nature/substance (ousia), three persons (prosopon) and three persons (prosopon), one nature (ousia)", he uses the term "ousia" to mean the common divine nature of the three elements. In Christology, on the other hand, he used the terms one person (prosopon) and two ousia (essence/nature) or two natures in Jesus Christ after the union (incarnation).[151] Although he regularly uses only the term prosopon for the person,[152] in many places in the work, Christ does not have a prosopon,

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[148] Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 107.
[149] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 189. According to Luise Abramowski, this work consists of two separate works. The second book, an apologia, was written by Nestorius, while the first book she attributes to a later author whom she calls Pseudo-Nestorius. Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 105, footnote 107.
[150] Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 105.
[151] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 170, 181,182, 233, 236, 247.
[152] Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching*, 51.

He used the phrases "prosopon of the divine nature" and "prosopon of the human nature" in Christ, or the term prosopan to indicate the difference between the divine and human natures.[153] From this, it is understood that Nestorius was trying to express that Christ had not only a person (prosopon) composed of the divine and human natures, but that the divine nature and the human nature also had a prosopon. However, expressions such as the prosopons of the divine and human natures do not prejudice the view that there is only one person (prosopon) in Jesus Christ.[154] For even though he expresses the divine and human natures as separate prosopons (persons), he insists that these two prosopons are united in the one person (prosopon) of Christ. Another important technical term he uses is the word "hypostasis". Although Nestorius frequently used the terms "ousia" and "hypostasis" to describe the "natures" in the person of Christ, he used the second phrase more frequently. In the Syriac translation of the work, the term ousia is sometimes translated as ousia and sometimes as ituta (essence), while the term hypostasis is always translated as knoma.[155] The term hypostasis is used in the same sense as ousia[156] and it is stated that there are two hypostasis (knoma) in the person of Christ.[157] However, the term hypostasis is not used synonymously with ousia only in the sense of nature. For example, when we say "The ousia [nature] of the likeness of God and the ousia [nature] of the likeness of the servant remain in their hypostasis"[158] , it is obvious that the term hypostasis is not used in the sense of nature. He also stated that natures cannot be conceived without hypostasis.[159] Nestorius criticizes Cyril's failure to acknowledge the prosopon and hypostasis of the two natures despite his acknowledgment of the two natures when he says, "Both of them [the two natures], without prosopon and hypostasis

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[153] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 190, 207, 218, 149, 238, 246, 260, 302, 320.
[154] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 182, 218, 302.
[155] Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching*, 49.
[156] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 228.
[157] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 322; Bethune-Baker, 47.
[158] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 172. In the work, ousia and hypostasis are used not only in the context of nature. They are also used in the sense of being or essence. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His*

Teaching, 54.
[159] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 322.

It is not known"[160] . From these and similar statements, it is clear that Nestorius attributed different meanings to prosopon and hypostasis. We will discuss the impact of these statements on the formation of the "two-knoma" view in the Eastern Church later on. The fact that Nestorius, while recognizing divine and human natures in Jesus Christ, did not conceive of a nature without a corresponding prosopon or hypostasis made him difficult to understand and gave the impression that he adopted a two-person Christology.[161] Therefore, it has been claimed (when in fact this is not the case) that he adopted a two-person Christology in Jesus Christ by conceiving of the divine nature as a separate person and the human nature as a separate person.[162] In the end, however, it is possible to summarize Nestorius' Christological view as "two ousia (natures) and two hypostasis/prosopons in one person (prosopon) of Jesus Christ".

The main focus of the debate between Nestorius and Cyril is the meaning of the term "hypostasis". Nestorius stated that the divine and human natures were realized in the one person (prosopon) of Jesus Christ and rejected Cyril's view that unity is realized in the hypostasis.[163] According to him, if it is accepted that the union takes place in the hypostasis (hypostatic union), the human nature of Jesus Christ disappears and all the actions of Christ are attributed to the divine nature. In this case, the attribution of the human actions of Jesus Christ to God would not only prejudice God's divinity but also destroy the hope of salvation for human beings. For if there is no human nature in Jesus Christ, then the mystery of the incarnation that brings salvation to fallen humanity is jeopardized. Therefore, he insisted that in Jesus Christ both natures continue to exist unmixed and unchanged, and that they are united in one person without separation or division. Nestorius quotes Cyril as saying of Christ that "his (Jesus Christ's)

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[160] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 218.
[161] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 239.
[162] The fact that he defined divine and human nature with prosopon and hypostasis facilitated this perception in the minds of those who accepted prosopon and hypostasis as persons.
[163] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 92-95, 303-306. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching*, 172-173.

[164] criticizing his views that "he does not think with the reason of his human nature or feel with his human nature", he thinks that Cyril ignores the human nature in Christ. In this regard, Nestorius' christological views reflect the characteristic features of the School of Antioch. For, according to this school, the idea that the God Logos is transformed into flesh (man) exposes the human nature of Jesus Christ to a transformation, which results in the disappearance of his human nature. Therefore, the unity of the two natures cannot be realized in the nature of Jesus Christ. For this reason, theologians of this school have tried to express the incarnation in terms of "logos and the assumed man" rather than "logos and body". Nestorius also stated that the divine logos did not become the human nature (ousia) of Jesus Christ; rather, the divine logos assumed the likeness of a servant or a human form (schema), and thus the union took place in his prosopon or human form.[165] In this way the divine word (logos) was manifested among humans, but the divine logos never became a human nature (it did not become human nature). Finally, it is important to note that neither Theodore of Mopsuestia nor Nestorius made a clear statement regarding the doctrine of the "two knomata" which the Eastern Church adopted as the official Christological position in 612. Indeed, Gewargis I, the Catholicos of the Eastern Church in the late seventh century, clearly states in his letter to the priest Mina in 679/680 that the crystallology of two natures and two knomata in one prosopon was not established by Theodore or Nestorius.[166]

Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, first expressed the Christological formula as "the one incarnate nature (physis) of the God Logos". In this expression, the idea of the humanization of the Logos is immediately recognizable. However, after a while, Cyril felt the need to replace the expression "pyhsis/nature" with hypostasis. This

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[164] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 152, 187, 218.
[165] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 164-165.
[166] *Synodicon Orientale,* 490-514; Reinink, "Tradition", 248.

"The logos has only one nature or, if you prefer, hypostasis, and this is the logos itself"[167] . In both cases, he meant to express the sole nature or personality of the logos. For him, the divine logos was not simply enclosed in an envelope of flesh and bone. The logos became human and thus became God-Man. Christ deified his human nature while retaining his original humanity. In his view, the Antiochene School went too far in emphasizing the distinction of natures (physis or ousia) in Christ and missed the central context of the mystery of the incarnation.[168] Cyril defended the sole subjectivity in Christ and refused to accept his bipolarity. Because he attributed all the actions of Christ to the logos, he said of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, "The Logos suffered without feeling."[169] He formulated the cryptological view of the Alexandrian School as "an incarnate nature of the God Logos" (henosis physike) and sometimes as "hypostatic union" (henosis kath hypostasin),[170] using the word hypostasis to mean person.[171] Nestorius stated that the union takes place in the prosopon, Cyril in the hypostasis. In fact, they both used different terms for the person, even though they both meant the person. Since Cyril used the term hypostasis in the sense of person in the expression "hypostatic union", for the Monophysites, the expression two hypostasis, which Nestorius understood in the sense of nature or essence, was understood as two persons.

In the letter of Shem of Beth Arsham, who was the first to use the name Nestorian for the Eastern Church, in his criticism of Antiochian Christology and its representatives, he likens them to the Jews who conceived of Jesus Christ as a man. According to him, the Nestorians believe that Mary should not be glorified because she

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has the same nature as us.

[167] Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 119.
[168] John Mcguckin, "The Miaphysite Christology of St. Kyrillos of Alexandria and Chalcedonian Dyophysitism", in *Introduction to Christology, Miaphysite, Dyophysite and Chalcedonian Understandings*, ed. and trans. Duygu - Akalin, 135-137, 146.
[169] Baby Varghese, "Miaphysite Christology and Eastern Orthodox Churches", *Introduction to Christology, Miaphysite, Dyophysite and Chalcedonian Understandings*, ed. and trans. Duygu - Akalin, 117.
[170] Mcguckin, "St. Kyrillos of Alexandria," 142-145; Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 62.
[171] Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching*, 51.

They dared to say that the human Jesus gave birth to a human being who was ink, created, corporeal, and mortal, and that the human Jesus is worthy of being called the son of God only because the Logos of God united with him through the incarnation and used him as a dwelling place. These statements strongly criticize the Antiochian school's view that Jesus Christ became the son of God not because of his nature, but because of the grace and honor he received by virtue of his human nature functioning as a temple (dwelling place) for the Logos. According to him, Jesus Christ is the son of God, not by nature, but by the grace and honor he received, and the view that God took a full human being from us (humans) for eternal union and dwelling must be excommunicated. For Christ is divided in two, the divine aspect is given to God, the eternal Son, and the human aspect is given to a man, Jesus, who suffered and died by grace and honor. Two sons are envisioned, one who possesses the divine nature and the other who attains divine sonship through grace and honor. Thus, Nestorians who believe that there are two natures and their attributes and actions in Christ after the real and ineffable union (incarnation) of two true natures deserve damnation.[172] These statements reveal that the dispute between the two sides is not based on a different understanding of Christological terms, but on a deeper disagreement about how the God Logos and the human Jesus, or in other words, the divine substance and the human substance, are united and the result of this union.

4.3. Images and Metaphors of Duality in Jesus Christ

The imagery and metaphors used in the Syriac tradition are very important in reflecting the diophysite character of this tradition. The extensive use of clothing imagery in this tradition in all aspects of salvation history in the context of the incarnation and the duality in Jesus Christ gives it a dynamic character that is less common in the Greek and Latin traditions.

[172] Simeon of Beth Arsham, "Letter on Bar Ṣawmā and the heresy of the Nestorians", 3, 6.

quality. The "theology of clothing" is deeply rooted in the Syriac tradition. Although these images have their roots in Judaism, they have undergone a significant development in the Syriac translations of the Old Testament and the New Testament. In this respect, it appears in a much more developed form in early Syriac literature, and especially in Afrahat and Efrem in the IVth century. In these usages we can see excellent examples of the Syriac genius for expressing deep and complex theological truths in symbolic terms.[173] In the IVth century there were two different forms of theological discourse: The Greek-speaking world was characteristically analytic and adopted some of the tools of Greek philosophy in the context of the controversy with the Arians. In the Syriac-speaking world, definitions of faith were viewed with skepticism. However, as the Greek theological agenda began to permeate, the traditional language of poetry, paradox and metaphor began to be replaced by the Greek form of expression. Although Although there was a decline in the use of this symbolic approach to theology during the Vth century and later centuries due to the dominance of the Greek theological agenda and mode of discourse, the continued preference for images by liturgical poets led to their preservation and survival, especially in the liturgical books of the Eastern Church. In this respect, it is possible to say that the Eastern Church's preservation of the characteristic features of the early Syriac tradition is related to the distinctive features of its Christological discourse.[174] The imagery used in the Eastern Church tradition regarding the human nature and body of Jesus Christ has been important in determining the position of this tradition in the Christological debates. In this section, we will try to evaluate the Eastern Church's use of imagery in describing the human nature (body) of Christ and the process of his incarnation in relation to Christology and salvation.

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[173] Sebastian P. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition", *Studies in Syriac Christianity*, part XI (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), 21.
[174] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 165.

In order to understand the connection of the images of "garment", "putting on and taking off" with the incarnation, salvation and duality in Christ, Sebasitan P. Brock first presents the conceptual framework of salvation history in early Syriac literature, which consists of four main phases. In the first phase, Adam and Eve are depicted in paradise before the fall, wearing the "garment of splendor" or the "garment of light".[175] In the second phase, Adam and Eve are stripped of their "garment of splendor" or "garment of light" due to their crime (the fall). In the third stage, God has prepared a divine design (incarnation) to heal the naked state of Adam/humanity caused by the fall. According to this design (incarnation), divinity will "clothe Adam" and when God "puts on a body," his whole purpose is to clothe Adam/humanity with that heavenly garment again. According to him, the incarnation generally consists of three phases: "birth", "baptism" and "descent/resurrection". In all three phases, there is a descent of divinity into the human plane. Of these stages, the one of central importance for salvation is the descent into the Jordan River. Because of Christ's baptism in the Jordan River and the appearance of the Holy Spirit, divinity has carried the process of descent to the most perfect point. In the fourth stage, the baptism of Christ in the Jordan River and the baptismal water provided both rebirth for humanity and the possibility of putting on the "garment of heaven" again. Thus, by being baptized and becoming a Christian, one repeats this ceremony and puts on the garment of glory that Adam lost in paradise.[176] In one of his poems, Mar Efrem summarizes this situation in the context of salvation and incarnation with images of dress and clothing as follows:

> "It is the merciful One who makes all these changes. He stripped off [the splendor] and put on [a body], for He had prepared a plan to put on again the garment of splendor that Adam had taken off. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in contrast to Adam's leaves. Instead of Adam's garments of skins

[175] In the Old Testament, Genesis 3:21, Adam's garments are called "garments of skins". In the Palestinian and Babylonian Targum, however, it is called "Ibusin d'Iqar", the garment of splendor. This usage is in line with that of the Mandai and Manichaean writers. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 14.
[176] Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 11-12.

dressed in clothes. He was baptized for Adam's sin. He was put in the tomb for Adam's death. He ascended and raised Adam. Blessed is He who descended, who put on Adam and who ascended."[177]

In the Eastern Church, the images of putting on and taking off clothes are seen and used in relation to the typology of Adam in the context of incarnation and salvation. Accordingly, whereas the First Adam lost the garment of paradise with the fall, Christ, who is called the Second Adam, put on the First Adam, that is, the human body, in order to restore the garment of paradise/divinity to humanity (to raise it to the level of divinity) through baptism. Thus, in putting on the "new man"[178] or "Christ"[179] , the Christian also puts on the "garment of glory". In these closely interconnected stages of salvation history, a certain merging and identification of identity between the First and the Second Adam emerges. If Christ, the Second Adam, put on the First Adam, humanity, then the First Adam (humanity) can put on the Second Adam (Christ and divinity). This is not only an act to restore humanity to its pre-fall state, but also to elevate it to the status of divinity, which is the purpose of creation. In this context, the use of the image of the garment in relation to the First and Second Adam first appears in the famous poem of the *Spirit in* the *Acts of Thomas.* The fusion of the two roles, the identity of redeemer and redeemed, is also very evident in the famous *Pearl* poem from the same work.[180]

Another image used to describe the Incarnation, the expression "Ibas Pagra" (He was clothed in flesh), was also a standard usage for early Syriac Christians. Not only among all the early writers (Acts of Thomas, Adday Doctrine, Ephrem, Afrahat, etc.), but also at the Council of Mar Isaac (410) in the translation of the Catechism of the Council of Nicaea, where it was used to translate the Greek term "esarkothe" (incarnation).

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[177] Brock, Clothing Metaphors", 13.
[178] Ephesians, 4/24: "Put on the new man"
[179] Romans, 13/14: "Put on Christ"; Galatians, 3/27: "Put on Christ".
[180] Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 16, 21.

It also took on a new identity. In the IVth and Vth centuries, many new usages were created by adding to the first word of this expression (Ibas), "to put on our body, us, our humanity, humanity, the body of Adam, the body of Adam the First". In all of them it is very important that what is worn is general. In the early writers, this usage appears as "to put on a human being" (in Syriac, "one" can be understood as putting on a human being). This usage first appears in the Syriac translations of Theodore of Mopsuestia: "For our salvation he clothed [a] man and dwelt in him". This phrase then began to appear among East Syriac writers.[181] The Greek New Testament does not use the expression "put on a body" for the incarnation of the logos. In two well-known passages of Paul's speech (Romans 13/14 "put on Christ" and Galatians 3/27 "you have put on Christ"), Christians "put on Christ" in baptism. The phrase "He came into the world as a man, taking the form of a man" in Philippians 2:7-8 can also be understood in this context. But the use of "put on flesh" with logos is not found in the Greek New Testament, although similar terms are used in the Peshitta as "Ibesh besra" (put on flesh) and "pagra den albestan" (You clothed me with a body)[182] .[183]

In the Eastern Church, clothing imagery continued to evolve among Nestorian writers. Narsay, for example, began to use expressions such as "the garment of the body" and Cyrus of Urfa "the garment of humanity", expressions that were consistently avoided by orthodox Syriac writers and rarely used in early Syriac literature. The starting point for this development is the Old Testament passage, "His garments in wine, and his robe in grapes".

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[181] Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 15-17; "The Christology of the Church of the East", 165.
[182] Hebrews 5:7, 10:5. In the Greek Bible the first phrase is "You have prepared a body for me" and the second phrase is "You have prepared a body for me".
[183] Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 15. Outside of early Syriac literature, the metaphor of "clothing the body" was also used by some anti-docetic Greek and Latin writers (II and III century). Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 16.

He will wash it in his red blood"[184] . Cyrus of Urfa interprets this phrase as "The Bible calls the garment a servant, which the divine nature has taken upon itself"[185] . Narsay used two archaic metaphors in his Christological poems to emphasize the distinction between the divine and human natures in Christ: The term Adam's body to describe the human nature of Christ and the image of the king wearing a robe of violet to depict the process of incarnation.[186] Examples of images and metaphors used in early Syriac literature and later Eastern Church literature concerning the incarnation, human nature and body of Christ include the following.

Those used with the metaphor of dressing (Ibash): Ibash; Pagra (our body), nasuta (humanity), nasutan (our humanity), dmutan (our form), shalman (our shape), eskiman (our form), kyanan (our nature), labsan (us).

Adam typology: barnasa qadmaya (First Man).

Attributes: z "uruta (smallness), galyuta (outward aspect), makkikuta, mukkaka (humility and modesty), mhilutan (our weakness), krihutan (our illness), khassa (pain, suffering).

The ones about Mary: "He came and entered through the ear of the Virgin Mary, and was in her womb for nine months, and was clothed with her flesh".

The image of the garment for Christ's humanity: Estla mallilta, "You turned us back from sin by the (reasonable dress) you put on of our humanity". "He made our humanity a garment to hide it". "The divinity hidden in the garment of our Lord's humanity". "By his holy blood the garment (estla d-pagranuteh) of his body was cleansed".[187]

V. century and later, along with the cristological debates in the early Syriac literature and later in the Eastern Church.

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[184] Genesis 49/11.
[185] Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 17-18.
[186] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 170.
[187] Brock, "Clothing Metaphors", 23-27.

metaphors became a matter of controversy among the followers of Antiochian and Alexandrian Christology. For the Monophysite Syriacs who held to Alexandrian Christology, the use of any clothing metaphor for the incarnation became suspect. For them, such imagery evokes diophysite Christology and the position of Nestorius. For example, the metaphor of "Ibesh Pagra" (putting on the body), which had been regularly used for the incarnation from early on, began to be abandoned by writers adhering to the Alexandrian Christological view, as it came to be seen as an expression open to misunderstanding. We find the strongest reaction to this metaphor in the Monophysite writer Philoxenus of Manbij. Instead of using the phrase in the Peshitta, "when he was clothed in flesh"[188] , he argued that the Greek translations should be taken into account. According to him, this reflects the position of Nestorius, who logosized a body, as putting a dress on an ordinary body, or an emperor on a violet cloak. According to the Alexandrian Christological tradition, the naming of the body as a garment is highly objectionable. In the same way, the image of the body of Christ being likened to royal purple (erguvian) also evokes the position of Nestorius in their eyes. Already at the Second Council of Ephesus (449), Hiba, Bishop of Urfa, was attacked for using the image of purple in connection with the incarnation. However, this metaphor had already been used freely in *the Adday Doctrine*, in the writings of Ephrem, and it continued to be widely used in the Eastern Church. For example, it was echoed in Mar Aba's letter of 544 as "the garment of humanity" or in the synod of 576 as "the robe of humanity".[189] Despite the widespread use of these images in the Eastern Church, at a time of intense theological and Christological debate, both

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[188] Hebrews, 5/7.

[189] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 165-167; "Clothing Metaphors", 17-18. Given Philoxenus' objection to those who use "Ibes/Ibusa", i.e. "to wear/clothing", it is ironic that it was the Assyrians of the East, not the Syriac Orthodox, who substituted "etgasham" (manifested) for "Ibes pagra" (a body was clothed) at the Synod of Selucia as a translation of "sarkothenta" in the Nicene creed.

They began to use images and terms more carefully. Undoubtedly, the fear of giving the other side an argument to use in their favor played an important role in this. This can be seen especially in the translation of many works translated from Greek into Syriac in the Eastern Church from the Vth to the VIIth century, which evolved from free and expository to literal translation. In these translations, which aimed to reflect as many details as possible from the Greek original, texts that had been translated into Syriac at an earlier period were revised and translated again. The latter translations used more formal equivalents of technical terms than the earlier translations. This process is most noticeable in the way terms related to the incarnation are handled. For example, instead of the phrase "He was clothed in flesh" (Ibesh Pagra), translations throughout the Vth century began to use the phrase "He was transfigured" (et-gashsham). Finally, the direct translation of the Greek phrase is "He became flesh" (besrana "it).[190] The diophysite character of early Syriac literature and its relationship to salvation and The images of "hmayra" (pledge) and "rahbona" (guarantee), which reveal the close relationship between the two, are also very important for our subject. With these images, it is expressed that the human nature of Christ, that is, his body, is a hostage that is taken out of humanity and raised to heaven, and that his human nature is a guarantee and assurance for the salvation of humanity. The word "Hmayra" comes from the Greek word "homeros" and means hostage, captive. It was used by early Syriac writers, notably the Peshitta, the Syriac translation of the Old Testament. In antiquity, hostages were not used in the sense of being seized by violence as they are used today. In antiquity, it was common practice to honor a treaty between dynasties or empires, or to give hostages as a guarantee and assurance that the treaty would be honored. Hostages

[190] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 167-168.

They were usually either the children of kings or nobles.[191] Afrahat uses the term Ezekiel's children being taken as hostages to the king of Babylon,[192] in Daniel "taken as a hostage on behalf of his people"[193] and many other places. After saying the sentence about Daniel, Ephraim says that Jesus' body was a pledge on behalf of all people.[194] Afrahat and Ephrem used this imagery especially in the context of the incarnation. Accordingly, the Son of the King (the Messiah) took on the body of Adam. The human body of the Messiah is conceived as a "hmayra" (pledge) from the lowly and taken to the kingdom of heaven, whereas the indwelling Spirit of the Messiah is conceived as a "rahbona" (collateral) received in exchange for baptized humanity. Since in general the children of kings are given as pledges, here the King is used in the sense of God the Father and the Messiah in the sense of the pledged son. Afrahat says, "He took him (Jesus' human nature) from those who were subject to death and from the human nature in which death reigned, to be a pledge (rahbona) of life (salvation), and he was exalted and enthroned at his right hand this pledge taken from below"[195] . In short, all these images of pledge and collateral are based on the idea of the human nature of Christ being raised up as a pledge for the salvation of humanity. However, in the course of the Christological debates, some of the images became suspect in the eyes of one side of the theological divide, and these usages began to be abandoned. The image of the "hmayra", which was used extensively until the IVth century, was also abandoned by the authors, but it continued to be present in the liturgical book Hudra. In the Hudra, especially in the passages where the body of Christ is mentioned, there are many references to the expression "homo assumptus" (the assumed man) and many expressions describing Christ as "the (voluntary) hostage of our genus/race" (hmayra d-men gensan):

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[191] Sebastian P. Brock, "Christ "The Hostage": A Theme in the East Syriac Liturgical Tradition and its Origins", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal*, (Accessed 25. 06. 2019), 2-3, 7.
[192] Ezekiel, 17/12, 19/9.
[193] Deniel, 11/33.
[194] Brock, "Christ The Hostage", 6.
[195] Brock, "Christ The Hostage", 8.

> "Who mercifully descended to His flock and out of love took a hostage of peace (hmayra d-Sayna) from our race and made him a choice for Himself for the purpose of His design [incarnation]". "Who came down from heaven for our salvation and took a hostage from our mortal race for His glory [to incorporate the hostage into His glory] and bestowed upon him leadership and headship". "Who came down from heaven for our salvation and took a hostage from our mortal race for his glory and gave him leadership and h e a d s h i p ". "Blessed is the hostage of our race, who revealed his glory in our humanity and was baptized by John to sanctify us". "Blessed is the hostage whom he took from among us, who humbled himself and lowered himself in order to raise us from our fallen state to the exalted heights of his divinity".
> who [in his person] has made us partners in his glory. "[196]

In the Hudra, the main liturgical book of the Eastern Church, there are many different expressions that emphasize the diophysite nature of Jesus Christ and his humanity in the context of salvation, in accordance with church tradition. The Nestorian scribal tradition calls this work "Hudra dam-dabranootha", meaning "Hudra of divine grace". It contains all the sacraments to be performed in one year, with reference to the plan of salvation ordained by the Father and realized by Christ.[197] Some examples of Christological expressions in the Hudra on the subject are the following: The Basilica hymn in the Hudra, which is the main hymn for Sundays, feasts and commemorations, and which is sung on the four Sundays of the feast of the Annunciation of the Angel (Subara), begins with a crystalline phrase in a high tone. Referring to God's promise to Abraham about the Messiah: "The Logos, God from the Father, took the form of a servant, not from the angels, but from the seed of Abraham. And in his mercy he came in human form, so that he might redeem our race from error."[198] On the second Sunday, similar words are repeated: "The great mystery hidden from ages and generations has been revealed to us at the end of time. For the only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of his Father, came and appeared in the form of a servant in his divinity. He explained and showed us again the perfection of the Trinitarian faith."[199] On the third Sunday it is said:

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[196] Brock, "Christ The Hostage", 7-9.
[197] Mar Awa Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church of the East as Expressed in the Khudra", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal* (Accessed 28. 06. 2019), 3.
[198] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 7.
[199] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 7.

"That which cannot be perceived or deceived by creatures has realized its incarnation through our humanity. For the divine nature was joined to the human nature, which he assumed without any change. By the power and wisdom of God, the Virgin gave birth to Christ in a holy way. We all worship him as we proclaim him to be the Son, and we accept him as the Savior of the world." [200]

On the last Sunday it is said: "The light from the Father, manifested in our humanity, was seen in the house of David and reigned in the house of Jacob, and has no limit to its dominion."[201] In the basilica hymn of the Sunday after the Ascension, the Christological understanding of the Eastern Church is also very clearly expressed:

"He who is essentially God [logos] took pity on our helpless and evil condition and clothed himself in our form, which could be a dwelling place for his divinity. He took him [his human body], took him to the cross, and with him [his human nature] delivered him up to death in order to give us life. He made him ruler over kingdoms and powers, and he raised his throne to heaven and kept it there. We who were sinners, as in the case of the first Adam, have been cleansed through the second Adam. Who can enumerate his marvelous lineage!"[202]

On the fourth Sunday night of Easter (Lelya) the following hymn is sung:

"Through the cross of Christ we have eternal glory over death. Through his suffering, he destroyed the destiny of death that had come upon us by his resurrection from the dead. With infinite praise we all cry out: "O Logos God, the Only-begotten Son, who put on our mortal body, have mercy on your servants who confess your cross."[203]

Hudra's Christological statements are quite simple, yet theologically rich. The main focus is on the duality of the natures, based on the strict diophysite Christology of the Eastern Church, and the unity of the divinity and humanity in the one person (prosopon) of the Son. Although there are many references to the two natures in the Hudra, the phrase "two knomas" occurs in the Hudra only in the Babai "Hymn of Praise" (Teshbokhta).[204]

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[200] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 7.
[201] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 8.
[202] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 8.
[203] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 8.
[204] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 6-7.

From what has been said so far, it has been tried to reveal how deeply rooted the diophysite character is in the Syriac tradition and how important is the role assigned to the human nature of Jesus Christ in salvation. In this respect, the parallels between the Eastern Church tradition and the Antiochian diophysite understanding have been an important factor in the positioning of the Eastern Church against Alexandria in the christological debates. The Alexandrian school, on the other hand, saw the Nestorian emphasis on the "human Jesus" as merely "the bearer of God". This was understood by them as an underestimation of the divine incarnation and a denial of the full incorporation of the logos into human nature.[205]

4.4. Salvation and Christology

The conflict between the Nestorians and the Monophysites stems mainly from the difference in the understanding of salvation. One of the most important points on which the Eastern Church's Christological testimony rests is the mystery of the incarnation, namely that the Son of God took on a fully human nature for the salvation of humanity. In this respect, it is very important for the Eastern Church to emphasize the duality of natures in Christ. In the Christological debates, the most controversial issues have been the truth of the incarnation and the nature of the role of Jesus Christ in salvation. In the context of these debates, three statements in the New Testament stand out. The first of these is "The God Logos became man and dwelt among us (Melta besra hwa wagen ban)"[206] , which is the most important argument that the Alexandrian school or Monophysites interpreted in favor of their Christology. The other two are "From the form of God he took the form of man (Dmuta dalaha dmuta d "abda nsab)"[207] and "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Yesu" msiha etmali uyaumana huyu wal "alam)"[208] , which are the main references that Nestorians rely on more in defense of their Christology.

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[205] Demirci, *Nestorian Christianity and the Theology of Antioch*, 60.
[206] John, 1/14.
[207] Philippians, 2/7.

[208] Hebrews, 13/8.

According to Nestorians, the first of these sentences clearly supports the existence of two natures in Christ. The last sentence is the favorite sentence of Nestorian Christology. This is because it is seen as the most important argument for the unity of the person (prosopon) and the distinctness of the two natures.[209] In the context of the truth of the Incarnation, the Antiochian and Alexandrian schools clashed especially over the interpretation of the sentence "The Logos became man and dwelt among us". The way in which this sentence was interpreted was decisive in determining the christological position of the two schools. According to the Antiochian school, any idea that the logos became human or underwent a change should be excommunicated. Narsay and Babai's interpretations of this sentence are important in terms of revealing the understanding of the church. Both men based their interpretation on the diophysite character of the Syriac tradition as well as on Theodore of Mopsuestia's understanding of Christ's human nature as "adopted/assumed man".[210] Narsay explains the first part of the sentence "The God Logos became man and dwelt among us" as the incarnation (creation) of man and the logos dwelling among us. He states that this is not to reduce the logos to the level of incarnation (creation). He says that the logos shapes and creates a body (human being) for itself and dwells in it with good will (voluntary desire).[211] Babai imitates Narsay in his interpretation of this sentence and elaborates a bit more. Babai starts by criticizing his opponents for interpreting this sentence in fragments and not considering the whole sentence. According to him, the words "Logos became man" are followed by "and dwelt among us". This points to someone else. The eternal Logos was with the Father in the beginning. The created man, on the other hand, was assumed. Thus the Logos was able to live among us. Therefore, from the Babai point of view, "to be human" or "to become" (hwa)

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[209] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 95.
[210] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 121; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 10.
[211] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 171.

His action does not speak of the logos existing in the beginning. But it speaks of the human being who was not in the beginning. "He lived among us" is said of the logos that existed in the beginning. According to him, the God Logos existed in the beginning, it did not begin with "to be". When John says, "The Logos became man," he does not attribute any change to the logos. Therefore, it is out of the question for the logos to become human, that is, to transform into something different from itself. Because if the logos becomes human, God can no longer be the Logos. The phrase "dwelt among us" means that God dwells "in a body or a person of our nature". Babai says that the expression "in us" or "among us" is like the expression "Emmanuel" (God with us). According to him, the word "became" refers to what is accomplished. The expression "He became man" means the same as "He became man". Babai likens this way of saying it to the New Testament expressions for Jesus Christ, "He received a curse"[212] and "He received sin"[213] . According to him, as in the phrase "He took upon Himself our sins and curses", "He (logos), as another person, took on/assumed a body and lived in it". In these phrases, Babai clearly distinguishes between the dual nature of Christ (logos and human) and states that the first part of the sentence refers to the human nature that did not exist in the beginning and the second part refers to the assumed body. In another interpretation, Babai states that the word "to be" indicates the characteristic of the eternal and non-eternal human being, and the word "lived" indicates "someone else". For the God Logos existed in the beginning (eternity), but the non-eternal human being was created. According to him, the God Logos did not become flesh by becoming human. When God sent His Son, there was no change or transformation in the Son. The Son had divinity from on high and humanity from a Jew. In this sense, the nature that was created out of non-existence means "became (human)". The logos, which was eternally with the Father, assumed man, took on flesh and dwelt in him. Babai, in short

[212] Galatians, 3/13.
[213] 2 Corinthians 5/21.

He states that the phrase "the Logos became man and dwelt among us" means that "man" was created and that the God Logos assumed him and dwelt in him. He rejects the idea that the Logos became man. According to him, the Logos and man, the embodiment and the embodied are different.[214]

The Nestorians rejected the Monophysite interpretation of the union of the natures in John 1/14 for two reasons. First, they accused it of attributing change to the logos, of failing to preserve the absolute transcendence of divinity, and of arguing that the Son was created, so to speak. The Eastern Church's insistence on duality in Christ and its concern to preserve the strict separation between the two natures has to do with preserving the absolute transcendence of the divinity and the abomination of the idea that suffering can affect/access the divinity. It should be noted here that suffering (hassa) for them clearly connotes fallen human nature.[215] The second reason has to do with the concern for salvation (soteriological). According to this tradition, salvation can only be realized through the incarnate Christ taking on human nature. Therefore, if salvation is to be available to humans, the human nature in Christ must necessarily be separated from the divine nature.[216] As the traditional images quoted above make clear, the human nature of Christ is central to the Eastern Church's understanding of salvation. Here, through a few examples, it is possible to express what role the Eastern Church assigns to the human nature of Jesus Christ in relation to salvation. In one of his poems, Narsay says the following on the subject:

> "If the Logos has become a man, let us ask whose body it is: Did he bring it with him from on high, or is it the body of a man? If He Himself became man and did not receive a body from Mary, what benefit does the incarnation of what belongs to Him bring to our human nature? ... If He came in the flesh in His own nature, while our human nature remains inferior, then how did mortals [humans] benefit from the logos that became human?"[217]

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[214] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 95-97.
[215] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 171-172, 175.
[216] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 172-173.
[217] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 175.

Catholicos Gewargis (659-681) also wrote in one of his letters

> "If Christ had not really become man, and his human nature had not accepted death for our sake, [though innocent of sin] and God in him had not raised him up, it would not have been possible for us sinners, who are condemned to death, to have hope of resurrection from the dead. For if it were God who died and rose according to the vile words of the unbelievers, then only God and those who are innocent of sin like him would be worthy of resurrection like him, and only those who are co-equal with him would be assured of resurrection, not our sinful human [mortal] nature."[218]

From these passages it is clear that for the theologians of the Eastern Church, salvation is realized for humanity through Christ's human nature (sometimes expressed as human "barnasha" rather than human "nasutha"). Given this, it becomes imperative to emphasize the duality of natures in Christ. At the same time, it becomes more understandable why the Eastern Church has such a fear of the teaching of the Cyriline line, which defends the one incarnate nature of God Logos. For the Eastern Church sees that in this case the hope of humanity's salvation would be destroyed. Based on the maxim that the unconverted cannot be saved, the essential thing for the Monophysites was to express the full truth of the incarnation of the God Logos. As a consequence of this understanding of salvation, it became necessary for them to emphasize the aspect of unity in Christ after duality implied that the Logos was not fully humanized. Both sides of the Christological spectrum, while agreeing that Christ is fully God and fully man and that he is co-equal with the Father and humanity, have had different conceptual models of how salvation for humanity is accomplished by Christ. In fact, the starting point for both churches with regard to Christology was based on soteriological (salvific) concerns, but their different perspectives on these concerns led to the emergence of different christological views. Hence, inevitably, different approaches to the same mystery, which on the surface contradict each other, but on a deeper level

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[218] *Synodicon Orientale*, 237; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 175.

They had to adopt two different christological formulations that tried to express it in terms of its points. Bearing in mind the Eastern Church's view of how salvation takes place, it becomes clear why the term "Theotokos" (God-born) was not adopted by this Church: Since salvation is through humanity taken from the virgin by the God Logos, it is impossible to speak of her (Mary) giving birth to God. This is at best an ambiguity, at worst a denial of the truth of human salvation. According to the Monophysite understanding of salvation, however, this title simply emphasizes the full reality of the incarnation of God Logos and is therefore entirely appropriate.[219]

The debates in the Christian world over the person of Jesus Christ and the interrelationship of his divine and human natures inevitably centered on the nature of the incarnation. As a result of these debates, in addition to socio-political reasons, the historical, cultural, hermeneutical and philosophical backgrounds of the parties have been influential in the formation of their cristological formulas. In accordance with the early Syriac tradition and Antiochian Christology, the Eastern Church has carried a diophysite character through its understanding of salvation (soteriology) based on the preservation of the transcendence of divinity, the superiority of the divine dimension in Christ, and the absolute existence of Christ's human nature.[220] However, the devaluation of the human nature in Christ as a result of one side within the Syriac tradition adopting an Alexandrian Christology-based understanding of the person of Jesus Christ and the nature of the incarnation that attributed the union of the divine and human natures in Christ and all the actions of Christ after the union to the logos led to a great division between the two sides. With the Roman Empire's policies to put an end to these disputes and to ensure religious unity, both Antiochian and Alexandrian

[219] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 175-177; "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 91-92.
[220] Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 102.

The Chalcedonian and New Chalcedonian formula of Christology, which had elements of the Chalcedonian formulas, did not satisfy either side. The Alexandrian school continued to regard all these formulas as Nestorian. The Eastern Church, on the other hand, found the Alexandrian school's formula of one nature (mia physis) and the Chalcedonian and Neo-Chalcedonian formulas of the composite one knoma (hypostasis snthetos) unsatisfactory in terms of demonstrating the existence of two natures in Christ. The Chalcedonians likewise accused the Nestorians of believing that there were two persons in the incarnate Christ and the Monophysites of believing that the human nature of Christ was swallowed up by the divine nature of Christ. However, in the end, due to the deep disagreements between the Nestorians and the Monophysites about the nature of the incarnation and the relationship of the natures in Christ, a coldness and sharp divergence developed between the two sides that has persisted to the present day. In this respect, it can be said that the Nestorians were closer to the Greco-Roman churches that were in favor of the Council of Chalcedon. It is now important to consider how the christological debates were handled and what formulas were adopted in the synods held before the Synod of Bishops in 612, when the Eastern Church officially accepted the doctrine of the two knommas.

4.5. Early Synods

A comparison of the crystallological expressions used in the two different creedal statements of the Synod of Mar Isaac (410), the first synod organized by the Eastern Church before the beginning of the Christological controversy, provides insight into the development of the Church's Christological position. In the more original Syriac Orthodox text of this synod, Christ is described as "born of the substance of his Father" (men ituta d- abaw), "of the same nature as the Father" (bar kyana d-abaw/homoousios), "a body

"clothed" (Ibesh pagra) and became human"[221] . In the Eastern Collections text, on the other hand, the Son is described as "of the substance of the Father" (men ituta d-aba-ousia), "of the same substance as the Father" (bar ituta d-aba/homoousios), "took on flesh" (etgasham), and "became man" (w-etbarnas)[222] . The most important difference between the two texts in the Christological context is that the former uses the phrase "bar kyana" and the latter "bar ituta" to denote the divine nature/essence that the Son possesses. In both cases the term "homoousius" is used. When we look at the excommunications section in the Eastern Collections text, we see that the term "knoma" is used in the statements "The son did not come from any other knoma or ituta (essence/gem)". Although the terms "knoma (hypostasis) and ituta (ousia)" are actually seen in the period after the Vth century, they are used synonymously here. In fact, at the Council of Nicaea, the terms "ousia" and "hypostasis" were used in different senses. Considering the more original Syriac Orthodox text, it is known that the organizers of the Council of Mar Isaac knew the difference between these two words used in the doctrine of the Trinity and used the term "ituta" (essence/essence/essence) instead of "kyana" (nature) as a translation of ousia (essence/essence). However, the replacement of the term "kyana" with "ituta" in the second text is very important as it shows both a modification of the original text and a technical and philosophical motivation that reflects the position taken by the Eastern Church in the later period. Thus, the term "ituta" is used to explain that the Father is the cause of the Son as a knoma (hypostasis).[223]

Although we do not have the official minutes of the synods of Beth Lapat (484) and Beth Adri (485) organized by the Eastern Church after 410, it is known that these synods adopted the interpretations of Theodore of Mopsuestia 596

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[221] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 133; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 357.
[222] *Synodicon Orientale,* 262-263; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 133; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 357.

[223] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 358; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifty to Early Seventh Centuries", 126.

Sabrisho" Council in 605 and the minutes of the Council of Greogor I in 605.[224] Therefore, we can only have an idea that the Christological statements of these synods were expressed from the Antiochian point of view.[225] In this case Ephesus (431) and the Council of Chalcedon (451), the Synod of Seleucia (486) appears to be the most important synod organized within the Eastern Church. In this synod, the term "knoma" was used for the first time in the official documents of the Eastern Church with the expression "one divine nature (kyana) existing in the three perfect knomas of the Trinity"[226] . Here the term "knoma" is closely related to "kyana" (nature) and refers to the difference between the three elements that belong to the same common nature (kyana). The Christological statements of the Synod read as follows:

> Our belief in the incarnation (mdabhranutha) of "Jesus" must, in fact, be a confession of the existence of two natures (kyana), divine and human alike. Let no one among us dare to mix (muzzaga), add (hultana), or melt (bulbala) the differences (shuhlape) of these two natures. But [each nature] remains in its own characteristics: Divinity in its peculiarities and humanity in its peculiarities. Because of the perfect and indissoluble union (nqifuto/sinafia) of divinity and humanity, we unite the differences/images (parshagne) of the natures into one supreme being and one worship. Cursed be anyone who thinks and teaches others that suffering (hashha) and change (shuhlapa) participate in the divinity of our Lord (nqeb) and does not recognize that in the unity (hdayuta) of the person of our Savior (parshopa) there is perfect God and perfect man."[227]

From the above statements, it is understood that with the incarnation of Christ, the divine and human natures (kyana) were in perfect unity, that after this perfect union there was no division, mixing, or admixture between the two natures, that each nature retained its own characteristics, and that the sufferings of Jesus Christ with his human nature cannot be attributed to his divine nature. In this sense, this crystallological statement is anti-Christological.

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[224] *Synodin Orientale*, 458, 475.
[225] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 126.
[226] *Synodicon Orientale*, 54; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 133; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 359.
[227] *Synodicon Orientale*, 301; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 133-134; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 360.

The Theopaschite character is quite clear.[228] According to these statements, the only person of the union of the two natures is the Lord Christ. A very important technical term, the word prosopon (parchopa), is used to designate the person of Jesus Christ, which is the first time it is used in the official documents of the Eastern Church to designate the one person of the two united natures.[229] Since this prosopon (person) is indicated by the words Christ and Lord, it is clear that the person of Jesus cannot be described by logos (theology) alone.[230] In this text, where the term knoma is not used in the context of Christology, the characteristic features of Antiochian Christology are reflected.[231] Antiochian Christology used the term prosopon for the single person of the incarnation. This term was also used in the correspondence between Cyril and Nestorius, as well as in the formula of unity in the text of the reconciliation between Antioch and Alexandria (433). In this formula the expressions of perfect God and perfect man, the difference between natures, the preservation of the unique characteristics of each nature united in one prosopon, are reflected here.[232]

Before moving on to the next synod, we would like to briefly touch on the Christological views of Narsay, one of the most important figures of the Eastern Church who lived during this time period. Narsay emphasized the difference between the two natures in Christ, but did not elaborate on the nature of unity. Narsay defines the two natures in Christ simply as the unity of two different natures in a single prosopon, likening it to the unity of soul and body in man.[233] Narsay says the following on the subject:

> "We name the created as a temple. For the word/logos created it in order to dwell in it. The mystery of the only begotten Son is that he dwells in that which he created with his own hand. The two are called one person (prosopon), like the body and the soul, fully [united]. The soul is by nature the source of life and the body is by nature the source of death. Although one is different from the other

[228] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 126.
[229] Abramowski, "Martyrius-Sahdona," 18
[230] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 361.
[231] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries",

126.
[232] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 363.
[233] Miller, A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 493-494.

> yet they are named as one person. Likewise, the word (logos) is of divine nature and the body is of human (nasuti) nature. The former is the creator and the latter the created. It is only through unification that they become one. When a limb of the body suffers, the soul in the body does not suffer. In the same way, when the body [of Christ] suffers, the divinity residing in it does not suffer. In the normal state, the soul, though created, does not feel the pain of the body. Figuratively, the suffering of the body is attributed to it [the soul]."[234]

The extant minutes of the synod organized by Catholicos Mar Aba (544) do not contain a clear statement of Christology. His letter on the "orthodox faith" to a priest from Susa, preserved in the documents of the Oriental Collections, also uses traditional language. In fact, this is quite interesting for someone who brought Nestorius' book from Roman territory to the East and had it translated into Syriac.[235] Between 486 and 544, the School of Urfa was closed down, the School of Nusaybin was opened, and the school administration, in the person of Theodore of Mopsuestia, was firmly committed to the Antiochian Christological view. Byzantine ruler Justinian (Iustinianus), a supporter of the Council of Chalcedon, who became Byzantine ruler in 527, started to support the Monophysites in order to win them over, accepted the theopaschite* formula in 533 and wanted to create a common meeting point between the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon and the Monophysites. However, these policies were not successful, the prosecution of Monophysites resumed and Monophysites, who had been active in the Byzantine region until then, began to seek refuge in Sassanid territory. The 544 synod's passages on Christology include the following statements:

> "... and after forty days he ascended into heaven while his disciples looked on. And because he was taken up [into heaven] in his true body, that is, in his perfect humanity, the angels said to him: "This Christ whom you have seen has been taken up into heaven." [Acts, 1/11] ... The disciples were told by the Holy Spirit that Jesus was not an ordinary

[234] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 119.
[235] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 127.

* Theopaschite: A term formed from the Greek words theos (God) and pashoo (suffering). It refers specifically to the incarnate God, the Logos, who can suffer.

> that he was man, nor that he was God, stripped of the garment of humanity in which he was manifested. But they had learned that Christ is God and man."[236]

In the passage above, the expression "the garment of humanity" for the human nature of Jesus Christ is an archaic metaphor used in early Syriac literature for Jesus' humanity. It states that Christ ascended into heaven with a human body and rejects the idea that he is God without human nature. The excommunication chapter also says the following:

> "... and whoever does not confess ... that at the end of time the Only-begotten Son of God was manifested in the flesh ... and whoever does not believe that Christ's humanity suffered and died and that his divinity is apart from [these things], let him be accursed ... and whoever does not believe that the name of the Son signifies at the same time the divinity and humanity of Jesus ... let him be accursed."[237]

Reflecting the diophysite Christology of Antioch, the synod generally excommunicates the idea that there are two Sons or two Christs, denying that each of the natures retains its own characteristics and that there is mixture, change, and admixture between them.[238]

At the Second Council of Constantinople (553), Theodore of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus, Hiba, Nestorius and all Nestorians were excommunicated for the doctrine of a two-person Christ and for adding a fourth element to the Trinity of three hypostases.[239] In fact, although these accusations were made against the Eastern Church, there was no strong reaction to these accusations at the synod held one year after the Second Council of Constantinople (554) under Joseph the Catholicos of the Eastern Church.[240] On the contrary, statements quite close to those of the Second Council of Constantinople were used.[241] The following statements appear in the synod minutes:

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[236] *Synodicon Orientale*, 542; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 134-135 Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 364.
[237] *Synodicon Orientale*, 543; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 367.
[238] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 172.
[239] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 370.
[240] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 499.
[241] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 127.

> "First of all, we maintain our orthodox belief in the two natures (kyana) of Christ, divinity and humanity. And we keep the characteristics (dilayata) of both natures free from any mixture (bulbala), corruption (duwwada) or alteration (shugnaya) and change (shuhlapa). In the same way, we keep the knoma of the Trinity as three and confess the one true and inexpressible unity (hdayata) of the one true God, the Father of truth, in His one true Son. If anyone thinks or says that there are two Christs or two Sons, and on any grounds or in any manner revives a quaternity, we have excommunicated and will excommunicate such a person and consider them to be outcasts from the Christian community."[242]

The above statements do not use any technical or philosophical terminology to describe the crystalline faith and repeat the classical Antiochian Christology with statements close to those of the Council of Chalcedon. The term knoma is used only in the context of the Trinity and the term prosopon is not mentioned at all. Nevertheless, it can be said that this synod was indirectly influenced by Chalcedon or Neo-Calcedonianism (553). The presence of the Monophysites (Severanists) who sought refuge as refugees in the Sassanid Empire played an important role in the historical context of this synod.[243] This synod both responded to the accusations of the Monophysites and fought against them. The evaluation of the relevant canons, especially the fourteenth canon of the synod, reveals that the synod was concerned about the new situation in the Sassanid Empire.[244] In the second half of the VIth century, the Monophysites became very active in the Sassanid region. In 559, Ahudammeh appointed the first Monophysite metropolitan in Sassanid territory. In addition, Hosrev I allowed Monophysites to build churches and monasteries in the region.[245] This led to a fierce conflict between the diophysite and monophysite traditions. In this period, apart from the Eastern Church, the term "Nestorianism" was also used in Byzantine lands.

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[242] *Synodicon Orientale,* 97-98; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 135 Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 370.
[243] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 372.
[244] *Synodicon Orientale*, 103-104; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 373-374.
[245] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 501. With the death of Severus, the leading Monophysite figure, the Monophysite hierarchy faced the danger of extinction. Considering the influence of the Monophysites in the eastern part of the empire, the Emperor, through his wife, entrusted Jacob Baradayi with the task of reorganizing the Monophysite Church. With his efforts, the Monophysites re-

established a strong church hierarchy. For the religious policies of the Emperor, see Duygu, *Christianity and Empire*, 388-399.

We are indirectly aware of the existence of those who adopted the Christology of two kyana (natures) and two knoma (hypostasis) in the one person of Christ (prosopon). Some Greek sources, such as the Nestorian Habib[246] , against whom Philoxenus of Manbij, a prominent figure of the monophysite view known for his anti-Nestorianism, wrote two works in Syriac, and the work of unknown authorship quoted by Leontius of Jerusalem (d. 543)[247] . It can be assumed that the influence of Babai the Great in the Eastern Church had an impact on the doctrine of the two knommas adopted at the synod of 612.[248]

In the 576 synod organized under the direction of Catholicos Ezekiel, although there was no official statement of faith, the canons of the synod included some christological statements without using technical terms such as knoma and prosopon.[249] During this period, the monastic organization in the Nusaybin region, founded by Abraham Kesker with a new model in accordance with the Egyptian monastic tradition, showed a significant development. [250]When Abraham Kesker made it compulsory for monks to read the translated works of Nestorius, Nestorius was recognized by the Eastern Church, especially in the diocese of Nusaybin, and his views became influential. In 562, a delegation from the Eastern Church traveled to Constantinople to discuss theological issues in the presence of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian.[251] Although invited, Abraham beth Rabban, the director of the Nusaybin School, did not join the delegation.

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[246] André de Helleux, "Le Mamlela de Habib Contre Aksenaya, Aspects textuels d'une polemique christologique dans l'eglise syriaque de la premiere generation post-chalcedonienne", ed. C. Laga - J. A. Munittiz - L. Van Rompay, *After Chalcedon: Studies in Theology and Church History Offered to Professor Albert Van Roey for His Seventieth Birthday*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 18 (Leuven: 1985), 67-82.

[247] Luise Abramowski, "Ein nestorianischer Traktat bei Leontius von Jerusalem", ed. R. Lavenant, *III Symposium Syriacum*, OCA 221 (Rome: 1983), 43-55; Aloys Grillmeier - Theresia Hainthaler, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche,* Band 2/2, English translation*, Christ in Christian Tradition* II/II: *From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590-604). The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century* (London: 1995), 273-274, 280-282, 309-311.

[248] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 353, 373.

[249] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 127.

[250] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 504; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church

of the East", 373.
[251] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 205.

Bishop Paul headed the delegation.[252] It was during these three days of meetings that the Eastern Church delegation first discussed the idea of "two hypostasis".[253] The minutes of this meeting discuss whether the human nature of Christ had its own hypostasis, as the Persian delegation claimed, or whether it was like the hypostasis of the divine nature. Although both sides agreed that man could not be "anypóstatos" (non-existent, unfounded) or without a hypostasis, since man could not exist, they disagreed on how human nature could possess it. The Neo-Calcedonians wanted to make the Council of Chalcedon's definition of "a person (prosopon) and a hypostasis" a little clearer and explained it as follows: Human nature exists in the hypostasis (m "qaima) of the logos of God. It is not seen and known separately in its particular hypostasis. Only in the hypostasis of the logos does it have its validity (hypostatic existence). The Nestorian delegation could not accept this. For them, hypostasis is the real, individual existence of a nature. If nature is human, then its individual being (hypostasis) would also be human. A nature and its hypostasis are indivisibly linked. Every existing nature is known and manifested in its hypostasis in the theory of sense, sight and reason. Therefore human nature, which is created, cannot have a hypostasis that is uncreated.[254] However, no Christological agreement was reached at these meetings. Babai the Great, who was to develop and formalize the Eastern Church's doctrine of the "two knomas", was at this time a monk in the Monastery of Abraham Kesker and seems to have been influenced by these views.[255] Meanwhile, the presence of the so-called Severan Monophysites in the Sassanid Empire began to increase day by day.

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[252] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 48.
[253] The expression "two knomas" is found in an earlier poem attributed to Narsai. See R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* (Cambridge: Cambridge Universtiy Press, 1909),
14. However, it is possible that this poem is not by Narsay and dates to the VI century. Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 174.
[254] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 500.
[255] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 8-9.

They began to gain adherents, especially among the monks.[256] The synod of 576 makes the following statements about Christology:

> "He voluntarily humbled Himself for the salvation of our nature, which has grown old and weary because of our sins. He obtained from the Blessed Virgin Mary an inseparable perfect temple (hykala) for the dwelling of His divinity. He was conceived by and born of the power of the Most High. The incarnate Christ is recognized and confessed in two natures: God and man, the only Son. In him the corruption of our nature is renewed and in his humanity the debt of our race is paid. And divinity has perfected humanity in suffering."[257]

The above statements show the direct influence of the statements of the Council of Chalcedon.[258] It reflects the traditional view of the Eastern Church in distinguishing between the two natures of Christ, emphasizing the unity of the person of the one Christ, the one Son and incarnation. The term Knoma is used in the excommunication section in the context of the Trinity. Anti-theopaschite thought is also expressed in the phrase "whoever says that the divinity (divine nature) of the Son suffers... is to be removed, expelled and destroyed"[259] .

When we look at the background of the 585 synod convened under Catholicos Iso "yab I, it is seen that important developments took place in the Eastern Church during this period. Henana, who had been the director of the Nusaybin School since 571, caused a serious internal turmoil in the Eastern Church due to his thoughts on Christology and the way he interpreted the Bible. Henana favored the works of John of the Golden Mouth in the commentary classes at the Nusaybin School and rejected the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia by excluding his works from the school curriculum. Since Henana's works were destroyed by his enemies, not much is known about his Christology and interpretations, except what his opponents transmitted. Babai said that he taught a composite hypostasis in Christ and then a mono-nature.

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[256] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 373.
[257] *Synodicon Orientale*, 113; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 135-136.
[258] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries",

127.
[259] *Synodicon Orientale*, 114; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 375.

also reported that he advocated a mixture of natures.[260] It is likely that he advocated the Chalcedonian Christology. These developments at the Nusaybin School caused many students and teachers to leave the school, including the two Catholicos, Isho'yab II and Isho'yab III, who would later become patriarchs of the Eastern Church. Moreover, since Henana's activities had a great impact on the monasteries in the region, the community of Abraham of Kesker began to fight against him and his followers.[261] Another development of this period was the visit of Catholicos Isho'yab I to Constantinople in 586/587 as the representative of the Sassanid embassy delegation. According to some historical sources, Isho'yab I wrote a statement of faith that was approved as orthodox by the patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch. The influence of Chalcedonian rather than Theodorean language is noticeable in this statement of faith.[262] Returning to the 585 synod, the statement of faith can be considered as an explanation of the Nicene Creed. The following Christological statements were used in this synod:

> The name "Christ" is an expression of his divinity from the Father and his humanity from the mother. ... and then [the church fathers'] doctrine of the union of the two natures of Christ (ba-mhayydut kyanah), that is, of his unchanging and eternal divinity and his humanity, which cannot be abused or ignored. ... The nature of his divinity has not suffered or died. ... This is the uncorrupted faith, and the phrases listed above are its meaning in a nutshell: The prosopon of Christ and his divine and human natures are fully proclaimed against those who confess his divinity and deny his humanity, against those who deny his divinity and confess that he is a mere man or that he is like a mere man. ... Heretics, faltering in their stubbornness, sometimes

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[260] Abramowski, "Martyrius-Sahdona", 19; Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 502. According to a recent study, Henana, due to the growing Monophysite influence in Sassanid territory in the second half of the VI century, tried to find common ground between the Chalcedonians and the Monophysites and aimed at reaching a theological compromise with the Monophysites. To this end, Henana rejected Theodore of Mopsuestia in favor of John of the Golden Mouth. He also tried to adapt Chalcedon's hypostatic union of two natures in Christ to the Monophysite formula of one nature and one hypostasis. The official adoption of the "two knoma" formula is thought to have developed as a reaction against the danger of compromise with the Monophysites. See Michael G. Morony, *Iraq After the Muslim Conquest* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 349, 356-357, 381. However, this view was rejected because it was based on Babai's accusation against Henana of holding a monophysite view. Some fragments of Henana preserved in the commentaries of Isodad of Merv show that he maintained the sharp distinction between the two natures in Christ in order to reject the theopaschite view. Margaret Dunlop Gibson (ed.), *The Commentaries of Isho "dad of Merv* 5/1-2 Horae Semiticae II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911-1916), 108. For further information, see Reinnink, "Tradition," 226-227.

[261] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 377; Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 49; Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 503.

[262] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 127. This statement of faith is also preserved in the Synodicon Orientale. *Synodicon Orientale,* 193-195.

> They dared to ascribe to the nature and knoma of divinity and to the [divine] essence of the logos what was made proper to God not by nature but by the incarnation, the characteristics of Christ's human nature (dilayata) and his suffering, because of the perfect union of his humanity with his divinity."[263]

When the above statements are briefly analyzed, it is possible to reach the following conclusions: Christ's human nature did not disappear within his divine nature. The true unity of the two natures, traditionally expressed as his "divinity" and his "humanity", does not mean that the human nature will disappear or that divinity can be transformed. Both natures retain their distinctive characteristics. The title of Christ is defined by the knoma of the Son in the Trinitarian context. The knoma of the Son is united with a human nature, and this human nature is not yet expressed as a knoma. It is therefore conceivable that unity occurs in the one knoma of the Son, which is a knoma of two natures, and this is called the prosopon. Since Synod 486, prosopon, an important term related to the incarnation, which had not been used for a long time, reappeared. Since the two natures belong to Christ, the prosopon also belongs to Christ. According to the Synod, a knoma is the revelation of a perfect nature, a term used only in Trinitarian theology. In Christology, the revelation of nature is expressed by the term prosopon. In this respect, the identification between the knoma of the divine logos and Christ, the unity of the two natures, is accepted only on the condition that this identification is made according to the incarnation and not according to nature. This means that because of the perfect unity between the two natures, the characteristics of human nature can be attributed to the divine nature of Christ, the knoma of the logos. With the phrase "by nature/not by nature" it is necessary to emphasize that the prosopos, which is the revelation of Christ's two natures, cannot be identified by nature with the knoma of the logos. For this knoma belongs to the divine nature, not to the two natures. Otherwise, the result of unity would be a single nature, not two different natures. In this respect, those who believe in one divine nature and accept the humanity of Christ

[263] *Synodicon Orientale,* 134- 136; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 136-138.

Those who do not, those who accept the human nature but deny the divine nature, those who accept Christ as a simple or ordinary man or as a virtuous man, are rejected.

When we look at the statement of faith written by Catholicos Isho'yab I in Constantinople, we see that a traditional language is used in the section on Christology. The following statements are used:

> "He descended, took on flesh and became man according to the divine plan (mdabhranutha), beyond any change or alteration. Before all times he was born of the Father in his divine nature, then in times he was born in the body of the ever-virgin Mary - one and the same [person] but not in the same way. The Logos became incarnate and dwelt among us in indivisible unity (hdayuta). ... He became [flesh] but did not undergo change: Let the Eutychians and Apollinarians lament; He took on [flesh] but did not add anything: Let the Pholinians and Paulinias lament. ... Christ, who descended from heaven without any change in his divinity, who did not become flesh, and who is in the eternity of his heavenly divinity, ascended into heaven in his humanity, his visible nature [human body] not having been abolished. ... Christ is the Only-begotten Son (ihidaya) and the united (mhayyda) One. He is the Only Son [in relation to the Father], united and indivisible. His divinity does not die, disappear or change, while his humanity is not silently ignored, concealed or abolished."[264]

The above statements can be considered to be in line with the statements of Kadikoy and New Kadikoy.[265] It is clear from these statements that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the incarnate logos, that he came down from heaven without any change in his divinity, and that he became man. Comparison with the Synod's statement of faith leads to the same conclusion. Accordingly, the knoma of the Son belongs to Christ as the "Only-begotten Son" and the prosopon belongs to Christ in union (incarnate). In this respect, "knoma" and "prosopon" have the same metaphysical meaning. However, since the term knoma is not used for the human nature of Christ, it is understood that this nature exists in the knoma and prosopon of Christ, the divine knoma of the Son. Therefore, one cannot speak of a definition of hypostatic union using the term knoma. Because there is the condition that this definition can only be made through the incarnation. For this, the prosopon

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[264] *Synodicon Orientale,* 453-455; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 138-139.

[265] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 127.

It could be argued that the term really means a unity according to composition.[266] Although the Synod spoke harshly against those who did not accept the works and doctrine of Theodore of Mopsuestia, it took no position on Henana's Christological position.[267] In this case, it can be inferred that Henana was condemned not because of his Christological position but because of his defiance of the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia. The Eastern Church, which had not reacted seriously to the excommunication of Mopsuestian at the Second Council of Constantinople, felt the need to defend Mopsuestian against Henana's activities.

The synod held in 598 under Catholicos Sabrisho does not contain any statement of faith. It does, however, contain an excommunication section containing Christological statements. This section contains the following statements:

> "We excommunicate and exclude from our communion anyone who denies the divine nature and human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ; who adds to the unity of the Son of God any mixture, admixture, composition, or confusion; who ascribes to the supreme nature of his divinity any form of suffering, death, or humanity; or who regards the divine temple of the Logos of God, an inexplicable mystery and an incomprehensible unity, as an ordinary man. He [the Logos] was united to himself in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary in an eternal, indissoluble and inseparable unity. ... We also hate those who add a fourth to the Holy Trinity, or who call the one Christ, the Son of God, two Sons or two Christs. We reject those who do not say that it was the God Logos himself who perfected suffering for our salvation in the body of his humanity; that he was inseparably in, with, and with him in the womb, on the cross, in suffering, and forever, and that in this state the supreme nature of his divinity shared none of [these] sufferings."[268]

It is clear from the above statements that although both natures of Christ are united, no mixture between them is recognized. At the same time, union is not a combination of natures. The union (nqiputa/synapheia) is simply explained as the way of being of the two natures in unity revealed by the prosopon. Accordingly, humanity belongs to the knoma of the logos and is a person,

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[266] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 383-384.
[267] Dr. Miler, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 503.
[268] *Synodicon Orientale,* 197-198; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 139.

It is the same logos of God identified with Christ, the person of the incarnation. While the divine nature is spoken of as a knoma, there is still no separate knoma for the human nature. The second part of the excommunication can be seen as a conditional acceptance of the theopaschite formula used by the Second Council of Constantinople (553) and adopted after elaboration by the Neochalonian thinkers. Those who do not accept that the God Logos perfects suffering through the human body are excommunicated. The theopaschite formula in Latin, "unus de Trinitate passus est carne" (one of the elements of the Trinity s u f f e r e d in the body), is strikingly similar to the synod's Syriac formula, "It was the Logos himself who perfected suffering for our salvation in the body of his humanity".[269] Accordingly, from the moment the human nature was united with the divine nature of the Son of God, it never left him and will remain with him forever. But this does not mean that there is a mixing and blending of natures. The divinity did not participate in the sufferings of Christ's humanity. Consequently, there seems to be a Christological view that can be expressed as the union of the two natures in the person of the Logos and Christ. Although the Synod again condemned Henana's challenge to the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia in the interpretation of the Bible, it actually came quite close to the Christological position attributed to Henana.[270] If the Eastern Church had continued to adopt and further develop this crystallological trend, namely the knoma-prosopon crystallology, it might have been possible that it would also have accepted the "communicatio idiomantum" (union of attributes/idiomatic communion)[271] . However, the triumph of this cristological trend did not last long, and the opponents of Henana and his followers, those who advocated the doctrine of the two knomata, began to gain strength.[272]

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[269] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 388-389.
[270] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 390.
[271] This statement means that what is said of one nature of Christ applies to the whole person of Jesus Christ. However, this does not mean that everything that is said of one nature also applies to the other

nature. By this, everything that can be attributed to the human or divine nature of Christ can be attributed to the one person of Christ.

[272] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 390.

Held in 605 under Catholicos Grigor I, one of the most important features of the synod was its harsh criticism of those who rejected the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia.[273] This synod coincided with a period in Sassanid territory when the Nestorians were losing ground to the Monophysites and were not allowed to elect a new catholicos. The following words are recorded in the synod's cryptological testimony:

> "... All things were made through the only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Perfect God and perfect man: perfect God in the nature of his divinity and perfect man in the nature of his humanity, divine and human natures, divinity retaining [its] properties and humanity retaining [its] properties, and they are united in the true unity (hdayuta) of the one prosopon of Christ the Son. And divinity has perfected humanity in suffering, as it is written that during suffering no change or alteration of any kind has entered into its divinity..."[274]

The above statements are traditional and do not contain any innovation. Knoma is again used in the context of the Trinity. Unity is indicated by the term "hdayata", not "nqifuto". To say that the Son and Christ are "one prosopon" was considered sufficient to express true unity. The decisions and Christology of this synod can be seen as an indirect condemnation of Henana's Christology, as well as its interpretive tradition.[275] A careful examination of synods 585, 598 and 605 shows that the dominant theme seems to be the position of Henana and the defense of Theodore of Mopsuestia against it. The traditional faith is carefully expressed, avoiding the use of the term Knoma, and Mopsuestian is defended at length. Although the bishops take a firm stand in defense of Mopsuestian, they are careful not to mention the disagreements within the church over the prosopon-hypostasis (knoma), a composite hypostasis, or two hypostasis (knoma). In this case, the bishops were not allowed to use these terms.

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[273] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 127.
[274] *Synodicon Orientale*, 475; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 140.
[275] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 391.

It is conceivable that they were uneasy and left the interpretation of these terms, which had not been used in previous synods, to the theologians in the schools.[276]

When these synods are evaluated in general, it is seen that a formula of two natures (kyana) in one prosopon (person) is used in relation to Christology. Accordingly, it reflects the classical Theodorean diophysite Antiochian Christology in that it contains many definitions that recognize Christ as a single person with two natures and rejects mixture and change between these two natures.[277] Sometimes the synods expressed the relationship between the divine and human natures in the incarnate Christ using different terminology and avoided the controversial expressions used in the Greek debates.[278] There is a difference between the terminology used in these synods for the two different categories of trinitarian and christological theology. The term "knoma" is used for Trinitarian theology and "prosopon" for Christology, while the term "kyana" (nature) is applied to both categories.[279] The knoma is used to refer to the divine nature of Jesus Christ as an element of the Trinity, and the prosopon is used to refer to the person formed by the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ. Since the human nature of Christ is not specified as a separate knoma, there is no teaching of hypostatic union in the sense of the formula of the Council of Chalcedon.[280] In fact, this is the dimension of the picture reflected in the synods. Because in the second half of the VIth century, there were heated debates on Christology within the church. Within the framework of these debates, three tendencies began to emerge: Henana and his followers, the traditional majority represented by the last three synods (585, 596, 605), and the monks and followers of Izla Monastery represented by Babai the Great.[281] In reality, this explains why the traditional majority avoided a definition of Christology in the official synods, supported by clear statements and technical terms.

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[276] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 503.
[277] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 172-173.
[278] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 85
[279] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 395.

[280] Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 398.
[281] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 503.

theology in the schools. The bishops seem to have refrained from giving such a definition and left the interpretation to the theologians in the schools. In this case, there is an important point that needs to be clarified.

In the synods mentioned so far, the Eastern Church did not officially mention the doctrine of the two knomata and used expressions reminiscent of the "one person" and "one hypostasis" formula of the Council of Chalcedon. Why then did the Nestorian delegation feel the need to defend the doctrine of the "two knomata" for the first time in 562/3 in the presence of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian? It is worth remembering that the Eastern Church, which was based on the Council of Nicaea and rejected the Council of Ephesus, did not have a clear statement about the Council of Chalcedon in the early period. Shahdost, a Nestorian Church writer of the VIIIth century, stated that Catholicos Akak (484-396) and Barsauma (d. 491-496), the bishop of Nusaybin, did not accept the Council of Chalcedon, but they were not totally opposed to it.[282] In this case, it seems likely that the Eastern Church understood the term "a hypostasis/knoma" used in the formula of the Council of Chalcedon as "a prosopon/person". This is because they understood the term "hypostasis" as a synonym for "person/prosopon" as an interpretation that supported the preservation of the natural properties of the natures in Christ. However, considering the term hypostasis in the sense in which Basil used it[283] , we can conclude that the Council of Chalcedon and the Byzantine theologians did not use it in the sense of Christ being a perfect and hypostatic person, implying that he did not have an individual human hypostasis, a real human being, and that it is synonymous with person.

[282] Abramowski - Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts,* 2/20.

[283] In his famous Letter 38, Basil gives a succinct definition of the use of hypostasis in the Trinity as distinguished from essence and nature: Hypostasis is that which, by means of its manifested properties, reveals and frames something specific, both common and unframed (nature and essence). Thus hypostasis refers to the nature present in the hypostasis. The Cappadocian Fathers used the term hypostasis to denote the difference between co-equal things of the same nature. Therefore, the question of whether the human nature of Christ has a hypostasis different from the divine hypostasis of the logos never arose for them. Nevertheless, their definition implies that Christ's human nature arises in His hypostasis, different from that of other human beings. Therefore, to ascribe a hypostasis to human nature means only that man exists in a concretely perceptible way. See Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 523-524,

footnote 91.

As soon as they realized that it didn't make sense, they refused to accept it. For if hypostasis, as the Eastern Church understands it, is to express the concrete existence of a nature, then it is more correct to speak of two hypostases. Otherwise, the human nature of Christ would lack full existence. Therefore, even if the doctrine of the two hypostases has not yet become the official confession of the Eastern Church, it can be recognized that this idea is embedded in their view of the unity of natures in Christ (perfect God-perfect man). According to Basil's interpretation of hypostasis, which they accepted, the two natures must be present in their hypostasis. If hypostasis is interpreted as synonymous with "prosopon/person", only then it would be correct to speak of a hypostasis.[284]

Indeed, Babai himself stated that many earlier church fathers had used "knoma" (hypostasis) in the sense of prosopon (person) and that this usage still continued in Byzantine lands. According to him, the formula of one knoma (hypostasis) in two natures (physis) was used to fight against understandings that saw Christ as either only God or only man. For this reason, knoma and prosopon were sometimes used interchangeably, and this usage persists even today in the Byzantine Empire. But this old usage must be abandoned in order to counter the theopaschite doctrine.[285] In view of the fact that the Syriac translations of the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia express it as "one person (prosopon) and one hypostasis", as it was used at the Council of Chalcedon, This suggests the possibility that in the Eastern Church in the VIth century, the formulas "one hypostasis/knoma" and "two hypostasis/knoma"[286] were used together without any conflict. Such a bidirectional or dual and therefore ambiguous hypostasis

[284] Miller., "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 500-501
[285] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifty to Early Seventh Centuries",131; "The Christology of the Church of the East", 174.
[286] These two different views are also classified as knoma-prosopon and two knoma. See Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 354.

Its use helps us to understand why the official christological explanations of the Eastern Church of the VIth century avoided the term. However, when some theologians in the Eastern Church began to use the expression "one hypostasis" in the sense of "one compound hypostasis" (hypostasis synthetos), which was used by the Monophysites and the Neo-Chalcedonians and adopted by the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople under Justinian, to the exclusion of Antioch's conception of two concretely existing natures, a radical reaction movement emerged. For according to them, the concept of "hypostatic unity" implies the emergence of a new nature through the combination of two natures. This would mean adding a fourth knoma to the three knomas.[287] All these concerns accelerated the process that led to the official acceptance of the "two-knoma" Christology that distinguished the Eastern Church from other church traditions.

4.6. 612 Bishops' Meeting and the Two Knoma Christology

From the second half of the VIth century to the middle of the VIIth century, the Eastern Church faced great problems and had to make important decisions that would determine the future of the Church in order to find solutions to these problems. The most important of these decisions was undoubtedly the official adoption of the "two knoma" formula. As mentioned earlier, Mar Aba's translation of Nestorius' writings into Syriac made his work accessible for the first time and Nestorius began to be truly recognized by the Eastern Church. This work began to spread among the schools and monasteries in the Nusaybin region, where Mar Aba was stationed at the time. Abraham beth Rabban (509-569), the head of the Nusaybin School, continued this movement started by Mar Aba. As a matter of fact, the delegation that traveled from here to Constantinople mentioned the "two knoma" formula for the first time. However, nothing came out of these meetings and the New

[287] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 501; Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 147; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 385-386.

A serious reaction against Chalcedonianism began to take place.[288] Henana, who became the head of the Nusaybin School after Bishop Paul of Nusaybin (d. 571), took a different path from his predecessors, rejected the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and removed his commentaries from the school curriculum. In the face of this situation, a conflict arose, especially in the region of Nusaybin, between two tendencies, one that adhered to the Antiochian tradition and considered Theodore of Mopsuestia the supreme authority, and the other, Henana and his followers, who adopted the Alexandrian way of interpretation and leaned towards Byzantine (Chalcedonian) Christology. Abraham Keshker (d. 588), a disciple of Abraham beth Rabban, founded the Great Monastery on Mount Izla near Nusaybin in the same year (571) that Henana became head of the school. As the Nusaybin School began to lose its influence due to Henana, monasteries began to come to the fore as centers of theological education.[289] In this sense, the Great Monastery stood out as a center where the opponents of Henana gathered and as a base where Theodore of Mopsuestia and Antiochian theology were defended. In this monastery, Evagrios, Abba Isaias, Paradise of the Fathers, the ascetical writings of the Cappadocian Fathers, the works of Mopsuestian and the book of Nestorius were used as teaching materials.[290] Dadişo", who later became the head of the monastery, continued the work of his predecessor and began to adhere more to the views of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus and Nestorius against Henana.[291] Babai the Great (551-628), who was to make the "two-knoma" formula the official position of the Church, also completed his studies at the Nusaybin School under Abraham beth Rabban and later spent some time at Abraham Kesker's Great Monastery. In 604, when Dadisho, the director of the Great Monastery, died, he took over the administration of the monastery, and after 608/9, the monasteries of the Nestorian Church, which were not allowed to elect a catholicos

[288] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 47-48.
[289] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VI century", 87.

[290] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 504.
[291] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 53-55.

has been an inspector on it.[292] Babai is known as the most important representative of the Izla tradition and its most prolific writer.[293] In the conflict between the two tendencies, Henana maintained his position in Nusaybin until his death (610), despite being condemned without mentioning his name in the last three synods, having his writings excommunicated by the bishop of Nusaybin, Gregor of Kashkarer[294] , and having his students leave the school in protest. This was due to the fact that the wife of the Sassanid ruler, Shirin, who was a pro-Chalcedonian Christian, and the ruler's physician, Jabrail of Sinjar, a monophysite, protected Henana in the eyes of the administration. His influence in the church continued after his death.[295] The Eastern Church experienced a serious danger of schism during this period, and the church administration, aware of this situation, refrained from making a clear definition of Christology in the synods, considering the socio-political situation, and considered it sufficient to reiterate the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia and to express the classical Antiochian diophysite Christology.

Another important problem faced by the Eastern Church during this period was that the Monophysites (Severans), who had taken refuge in the Sassanid region and established a number of monasteries in the north of Iraq, gradually gained a foothold in the Sassanid administration.[296] In the VIth century, there were very important Monophysite theologians such as James of Suruç (c. 521), Philoxenus of Manbij (c. 523), Severus of Antioch (c. 538) and John Philponus (c. 565). Of these, James and Philoxenus were Syriacs, and their Syriac writings spread easily throughout Persia. There were bitter disputes between the Severans and Nestorians, who hated each other.[297] The Monophysites were able to gain a foothold with the Sassanids and

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[292] For the life of Babai, see Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 4-15.
[293] Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 504.
[294] Since Henana's name is not mentioned in the last three synods, there are those who believe that these excommunications were not directed against him but against the Monophysites, who at that time were intensifying their activities in the northern Mesopotamian region, see Reinnink, "Tradition", 238-241.
[295] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 48-53.

[296] Brock, "The Eastern Church in the Sassanid Empire until the VIth Century", 86.
[297] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 56-57.

The Nestorians began to be worried by the increase in the number of Nestorians in the Eastern Church. The Monophysites did not want to miss the opportunity and tried to take advantage of the division within the Eastern Church as much as possible. Indeed, when Sabrisho (596-604), the catholicos of the Eastern Church, died, most of the bishops wanted to make Gregor of Keskerli, the aforementioned bishop of Nusaybin, who had been prominent in the struggle with Henana and the Monophysites, the patriarch, but the Monophysites prevented this and made Grigor of Euphrates Misan (605-609), a less harmful name for them, the catholicos. After the death of this catholicos, the election of a new catholicos was not allowed as a result of the activities of Gabriel of Sinjar before Hosrev II. In 612, as a result of the efforts of a Nestorian priest named Mar Gewargis, Khusraw II agreed to allow the election of a catholicos, but demanded that the parties first organize a discussion assembly. The Nestorian delegation was represented by the bishop of Beth Germai, Shubhalmaran, who would be imprisoned in 620. Among them was the future Catholicos.

Iso "yab "Arbaya II (628-646) was also present. In the statement of faith prepared during this meeting, the doctrine of the "two knomas" was officially accepted and defended for the first time. Although Babai did not attend this meeting, he had a great influence on this statement of faith. However, Hosrev II did not allow the election of a catholicos at the end of the meeting, and shortly afterwards he had Mar Gewargis, a member of the delegation representing the Izla Monastery, killed as a result of Gabriel's machinations.[298] Thus, the Eastern Church, which was deprived of a catholicos from 609 to 628, was exposed to both the pressure of the Sassanid administration and the pressure of the Monophysites and Henana followers, and tried to overcome this difficult period under the leadership of Mar Babai, who was appointed as an inspector over the monasteries.

Western scholars have put forward various views as to the reasons for the

Eastern Church's official adoption of the two-knoma formula. Antoine

[298] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 60-61.

According to Guillaumont, the Eastern Church faced a serious monophysite danger and the Henana schism, which directly affected the Church. Since the doctrine of the two knomas was expressed by the delegation to Justinian, it was developed as a reaction to the hypostasis of the Fifth Ecumenical Council. Henana, according to him, adhered to the hypostasis of this council, parted ways with his own church and caused a serious schism.[299] Andrê de Halleux developed a different point of view. According to him, there is no Nestorian formula similar to the two-knoma Christology before the beginning of the VIIth century. The one-knoma doctrine continued to exist until the VIIth century and competed with the two-knoma doctrine. By 612, under the influence of Babai, the two-knoma doctrine became normative, and after that the freedom of theologians to take a different position on cristological matters ended. According to him, the adoption of the two-knoma doctrine cannot be explained by the "heterodox" movements that emerged in the Eastern Church as a result of contacts with the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon and the Monophysites. It must be seen as a result of the internal development of the East Syriac diophysite tradition, based on the theological ideas of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the greatest authority of the East Syriac tradition.[300] Luise Abramowski, on the other hand, establishes a direct link between the New Chalcedonian "one hypostasis" (knoma) formula of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) and the doctrine of the two knomas. According to him, this new Christological formula was shaped on the theological principles of Nestorius' book translated into Syriac. This is because the Eastern Church felt obliged to position itself against the New Chalcedonian formula. Nevertheless, the synods of the Eastern Church continued to adhere to the traditional Antiochian Christology of two natures and one prosopon. It was only after an influential figure such as Henana began to propagate the New Chalcedonian formula of "one composite hypostasis",

[299] Antoine Guillaumont, "Justinien et l "église de Perse", 57-62. cited in Reinnink, "Tradition", 221.

[300] André de Halleux, "La christologie de Martyrios-Sahdona dans l "évolustion du nestorianisme", *OCP*, 23 (1957), 5-32. cited in Reinnink, "Tradition", 221-222.

A very dangerous situation arose in which the Eastern Church had to choose between the formulas of "two natures and one prosopon" and "two natures, two knomas and one prosopon", and in 612 the final decision was made in favor of the latter formula.[301] The same author considers Nestorius' work, translated into Syriac, as a reason for the change in the traditional terminology of Urfa and Nusaybin. For, with the exception of the term parchopa, which was used in the synod of 486, the terms knoma and parchopa were not used in the context of Christology in the synodal minutes prior to 585. Moreover, in the schools of Urfa and Nusaybin, the restriction of the use of the knoma to the Trinity, due to the understanding of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was influential after 431, made it impossible to teach the diophysite doctrine as "one knoma" or "two knomas".[302] According to Gerrit J. Reinnink, who evaluates all these views, there is little doubt that the controversy in the Syriac Church of the East over the crystallological use of the knoma arose from the decisions of the Fifth Ecumenical Council. Since it took a long time for the "Nestorian" identity to be accepted by all sectors of the Eastern Church, this cannot simply be explained by the assumption that Henana broke away from the mainstream with the introduction of a new cryptological interpretation, which led to a split in the Eastern Church that would be felt for a long time. According to him, the ecclesiastical policy of Justinian (527-565), culminating in the decisions of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553): How to relate the existing Antiochian-characterized diophysite Christology of the Eastern Church to the concept of hypostasis (knoma), and the reconsideration of Theodore's pre-eminent position in the Eastern Church tradition. The fact that the two main trends in the Syriac East community, concentrated in the main center of education, the Nusaybin School, follow different models and adopt different views in trying to answer these questions, and that they see themselves as the legitimate orthodox heir of the Syriac East community

[301] Luise Abramowski, "Die Christologie Babais des Grossen", in *Symposium Syriacum I*, OCA 197

(Rome: 1972), 221-222. cited in Reinnink, "Tradition", 222-223.
[302] Abramowski, "Martyrius-Sahdona", 18-19.

The "tradition" that recognizes it as such is complex, multifaceted and sometimes ambiguous in relation to fundamental points. As the Monophysites also increased their influence in northern Mesopotamia and tried to take advantage of the tensions within the Eastern Church, polarization between the two trends increased. This led to the victory of the anti-Henana movement at the bishops' meeting of 612.[303] To express the existence of two natures, the Monophysite formulas of "mia physis" or Justinian's "one composite knoma" (hypostasis snthetos) were not satisfactory. Because the preservation of the characteristics of both natures was not possible with these formulas. For this reason, the two-knoma theory was developed.[304] When we evaluate all these, it is understood that the Eastern Church's need for redefinition in the face of the New Chalcedonians and Monophysites was the main factor that initiated this process. The existence of Henana[305] and his followers and the church entering a process of division, the Monophysites gaining positions in the Sassanid geography and using this as a means of pressure against the Nestorians accelerated this process. This situation led to the development of a reaction movement led by Babai and necessitated the radical defense of the Antiochian diophysite understanding. In this process, issues such as "hypostatic unity", "theopaschism" (the belief that God suffered), "the title of the Theotokos", "the two Sons and the four uknum", which caused deep divisions among Christians and were intensely debated, forced a sharp position to be taken, and all this was reflected in the synod of 612 in the form of the official adoption of the "two-knoma" Christology.

Looking at the 612 statement of faith presented to Khusraw II, one can see that it is a sharp position with an uncompromising Antiochian expression. This

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[303] Reinnink, "Tradition", 230, 248-249. The same author sees the organization of the 612 bishops' meeting as a plot by Gabriel of Sinjar. According to him, this meeting was intended to force the Church to define a crystallology in order to inflame the cryptological debates within the Eastern Church and deepen the schism. Same article, 247.

[304] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 147.

[305] Nevertheless, we have to admit that we do not know enough about Henana's crystallogical position and, if, as claimed, he adopted Chalcedonian Christology, we do not know enough about his reasons for doing so.

The statement of faith contains the following objections to the doctrine which the Eastern collections call "Severan Theopaschism": "against those who confess one nature and one knoma in Christ, against those who say that God suffered in the flesh and died in the flesh, against those who ask whether the Blessed Virgin gave birth to God or man, against those who falsely accuse us of confessing a quaternity and two sons instead of the Trinity". 612 The statement of faith reads as follows:

> "From the moment the God Logos assumed human nature, perfect union (neqpa) and indissoluble unity (hdayuta dla purshana) took place. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of the Father in His divine nature and born of the daughter of David [Mary] in His human nature, is confessed as one person (prosopon). The scriptures use the "form of God" and the "form of a servant" for Jesus Christ in statements such as "t h o u g h h e had the essence of God, he took the form of a servant and was manifested in the likeness of men"[306] . Who is called "God form" if he is not the Christ in the nature of his divinity and who is called "servant form" if he is not the Christ in his humanity? Notice that the phrases "he received" are used for "God form" and "received" for "servant form". Therefore it is not possible to confuse the characteristics (dilayathon) of both natures. Because it is not possible for "the received" to become "the received" or "the received" to become "the received". It is possible for the God Logos to manifest in the human nature he wears, and for his human nature to become visible to creatures as the only Son of God in the mode (teksa) and indissoluble unity of his humanity. It is not possible for divinity to become humanity or for humanity to be transformed into the divine nature. For [God's] existence (itya) cannot be subjected to the necessity of change and suffering, and therefore if divinity is transformed, it is no longer the manifestation of divinity, but the extinction of divinity. Likewise, if humanity is separated from [Christ's] nature, there is no longer salvation, but the destruction of humanity. Therefore, his humanity cannot be ignored. He is both perfect God and perfect man. When we say he is the perfect God, we are not referring to the Trinity, but to the Logos, which is a knoma of the Trinity. Likewise, when we say perfect man, we are not referring to the whole of humanity, but to the one knoma united with the logos for our salvation in particular. In his divinity he was born of the eternal Father and in his humanity he was born of the Blessed Virgin in the last times for our salvation. In his divinity he existed without need of anything, unaffected by pain and change, while in his humanity he was circumcised after his birth and grew up like his peers, the children. He followed the law [of Moses] and was baptized by John in the Jordan River. Then he began to preach the New Testament. By the power of his divinity he performed miracles, and by the nature of his humanity he thirsted, hungered, ate, drank, tired and slept. After all this, he gave himself up, was crucified, suffered and died for our salvation. Through it all, his divinity was not separated from him or

[306] Philippians, 2/6-7.

> he felt no pain. His body was wrapped in a shroud and buried in the tomb. He was resurrected three days later by the power of His divinity. Showing his hands and feet to his disciples, he said, "Touch and see. The soul has no flesh and bones. But as you can see, I do."[307] He convinced them with his words and actions that he was resurrected. For forty days he walked the earth with his disciples. Then he ascended into heaven in front of his followers. "Jesus was taken up from among you. As you have seen him ascended, so he will return"[308] "ascended" clearly refers to the knoma of his humanity. This human nature has not been destroyed or changed; it retains its own characteristics in inseparable union with his divinity.[309] Accordingly, it is quite clear that Christ is perfectly God and perfectly man. If it can be said that he is perfect in the nature and knoma of divinity, then it can also be said that he is a perfect man in the nature and knoma of humanity. *Jesus Christ is one person in two natures and two natures*. The fact that Christ is a person does not imply the unity of his natures and knomas. Rather, in the one prosopon [person] of the [divine] sonship, there is one government, one power, and one dominion."[310]

In 612, after the official acceptance of the doctrine of the "two knomata", the debates about this view did not end immediately, and there were those within the church who opposed this view. This was especially the case with Babai and with the Catholicos who would become Catholicos after 628.

It is understood that they felt the need to explain the doctrine of the "two knomas" in more detail in the works of Isho "yab II (628-646). Babai's work on this subject, *The Book of Unity, is* the only work written on the Christology of the Eastern Church. Babai also dealt with this subject in many other works.[311] From Babai's *Life of Gewargis*[312] (written between 621 and 628), it is clear that after 612 the church authorities had to deal with at least two problems. On the one hand, Babai struggles with the Henanaites, whom he accuses of adopting a "one knoma" Christology, and on the other hand, with the wider ecclesiology, which defends the traditional Antiochian Christology of "two natures and one prosopon".

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[307] Luke, 24/39.
[308] Acts, 1/11.
[309] *Synodicon Orientale,* 566-567; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 141.
[310] *Synodicon Orientale*, 575; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centurie", 142.
[311] Many works are attributed to Babai. For a comprehensive list of his works, see Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 17-41.
[312] For the Syriac edition of this work, see Babai, *Life of George*, ed. Paul Bedjan, *Histoire de Mar-Jabalaha, de trois autres patriarches, d'un prêtre et de deux laïques nestoriens* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1895), 416-571.

He had to contend with a group of scholars and clergy.[313] It seems that the real problem for Babai was not the dangerous cryptological innovation emanating from Henana and his followers to adapt the traditional diophysite Christology of the Church to monophysite Christology. The problem he was concerned with was the fact that a significant group of teachers and theologians in the Persian Church considered the "two-knoma" view to be a new claim. This shows that a significant majority within the church were not fully convinced of the "two knoma" formula. Babai cannot conceal the fact that this group, in making this objection, was not only relying on the Christological formulas of the traditional synods, but was also referring to the tradition of the authoritative orthodox fathers whose works are studied in schools. Babai accuses Henana, who adheres to the "two natures, one prosopon" formula, of misinterpreting the "meaning of orthodoxy" in the works of the "ancient fathers". According to him, in the time of the ancient Fathers, the expression two knoma was not used because there was no need for a specific explanation that two natures meant two knoma. However, with the onset of the theopaschite heresy with Cyril of Alexandria and the identification of the prosopon with the knoma (hypostasis), Nestorius and others like him had to openly proclaim the doctrine of two natures and two knoma, which retained their own characteristics in a prosopon of Christ. According to Babai, already before Nestorius, Theodore of Mopsuestia, in the eighth book of his work *On the Incarnation,* which refuted Apollinarius, clearly expressed the view of "two natures and two knomas in one prosopon of Christ". Babai says that because of this, it is clear beyond any doubt to the entire church tradition in Persia what orthodoxy means and what heresy is. According to Babai, because of the derivation of this heresy, which confused the two natures and attributed suffering to God, today, in the confession of "two natures one prosopon"

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[313] Reinnink, "Tradition", 220, footnote 9.

Anyone who is present but does not at the same time express the words, "The two natures and their knomata, which retain their characteristics in the prosopon of Christ, the Son of God, in an eternal unity and union" is a heretic and must be excommunicated. Although Babai states that the formula of the two knomas was clearly stated earlier by the ancient Fathers, in other works he is forced to admit that the tradition was not clear on this point and that the ancient Fathers used the terms prosopon and knoma (hypostasis) interchangeably in their teachings.[314] This should be seen as a consequence of the fact that the theologians of the Eastern Church, who objected to the formulation of the doctrine of "two knomata" as a new invention and defended the "one knoma" Christology, brought as evidence that Mopsuestian used the terms prosopon and knoma interchangeably.[315]

From these accounts, it is clear that two tendencies persisted within the Eastern Church, aiming to give "a new crystallological notion" to the diophysite tradition of their church. One tendency, mostly using the Syriac translation of Mopsuestian's *On the Incarnation*, recognized a close relationship between the concept of prosopon and the concept of hypostasis (knoma), while the other, following the line of Nestorius, associated the concept of nature (kyana) more closely with the concept of hypostasis (knoma). Each group accused the other of committing innovation. This is because each was able to bring evidence from the tradition of the ancient fathers, which is considered orthodox in the Syriac Church of the East, to support his view. One side assumed that the proposition "prosopon/knoma" meant "two natures/two knomas," leading to the unacceptable conclusion of "two prosopons" in Christ, while the other

[314] For his work "Against those who say that God Logos and Man form a Knoma as the Soul and Body form a Knoma", see A. Vaschalde (ed.), *Babai Magn. Liber de Unione*, CSCO 79-80/ Scriptores Syri 34-35 (Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1915), 235-247.
[315] Reinnink, "Tradition", 227-228.

The other side assumed that "nature/knoma" meant "one prosopon/knoma", which the Monophysites thought would lead to the proposition of "one nature" in Christ.[316]

Isho "yab II (628-646), who was elected catholicos in 628 after the Eastern Church had spent a long period without a catholicos, also made efforts to understand the "two knoma" Christology before becoming catholicos, just like Babai. In this regard, he sent a letter to Abraham of Beth Maday, in which the formula "two natures and two knomata in the unique prosopon of Christ" was discussed in detail.[317] During the Catholicosates of Marameh and Isho'yab Jidali III, the church had to deal with opposition from the proponents of the traditional "one-knoma" doctrine until the forties of the VIIth century, as evidenced by the disputes with Martyrius-Sahdona, bishop of Mahoza d-Arewan (Beth Germai)[318] . Indeed, in the first canon of the 676 synod organized by Catholicos Gewargis I, the Church was instructed to teach the Christological confession on every feast and Sunday so that the heretics would know how to define their religious identity.[319]

To summarize, the Nestorian identity, which means "two knomas", took a long time to be accepted by all segments of the Eastern Church. Over the decades, the theologians of the Eastern Church created sharp boundaries between the Diophysites and the Monophysites, so that the Nestorian identity could be accepted by the religious community. This was done in the second half of the VIIth century with the process of liquidation of the mixed Monophysite and Diophysite communities and monasteries in northern Mesopotamia. According to John bar Penkaye, a historian of the Eastern Church, during the Arab conquest, the Christian world was divided into three parts. Accordingly, the Easterners (Nestorian Church) believed that Christ was God and man, the only son of God, man who is God, and God who is man,

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[316] Reinnink, "Tradition", 229.
[317] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*.
[318] Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East", 174; Ebeid, "The Christology of the Church of

t h e East", 398-399.
[319] *Synodicon Orientale*, 483.

They were confessing the true and orthodox doctrine of two natures and two hypostases (knoma) in the unity of the one prosopon of the sonship. Westerners, on the other hand, confessed on the one hand that the divine being can suffer and die, and on the other hand that there are two natures and one hypostasis. This situation is important in that it shows that by the end of the VIIth century, the Eastern Church had completely clarified its identity against the Monophysite and Chalcedonian churches in line with the 612 creedal statements.[320] Although the "Nestorian" identity was officially recognized during this period, the process of its acceptance by the largest parts of the Eastern Church community as their hallmark and self-definition was still incomplete until the early stages of Muslim rule in Iraq.[321]

4.7. Defenders of the Two Knoma Doctrine: Babai and Isho "yab II

After the crystallology of the "two knomata" was officially accepted by the Eastern Church in 612, it was extensively expounded, especially by Babai and Isho "yab II. In this respect, the explanations provided by these two figures are important in terms of establishing the standard understanding of the two-knoma crystallology. In *The Book of Unity*, the only work written on the subject of Christology in the Eastern Church, and in his other works, Babai concentrates on theological and Christological issues such as "hypostatic union", "theopaschism", Henanism, "Theotokos" (God-Begotten), and the accusation of "adding a fourth to the Trinity with the Two Sons".[322] He opposes Cyril's use of terms such as "natural unity" (henosis physike) and "hypostatic unity" (henosis kath" hypostasin) to denote the unity of the two natures in the incarnation of the logos. He sees the phrase "natural and hypostatic union" (hdayuta kyanaita waknomaita) as one of the fundamental Christological errors. According to him, there is an inconsistency between Cyril's recognition of Christ as a full human being and his mention of a natural hypostatic union.

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[320] Reinnink, "Tradition", 217-218.

[321] Reinnink, "Tradition", 249-250.
[322] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 65.

exists. Natural and hypostatic unity are necessary and essential as a union of soul and body that results in a knoma. However, natural unity results in a mixture of the two, and hypostatic unity results in a single hypostasis. Babai states that if the natural and hypostatic unity is affirmed, then a composite nature and composite hypostasis (knoma druqaba) are accepted. Here, he mainly aims to prevent the emergence of a belief that divinity is subject to the human trait of suffering.[323]

On the subject of theopaschism (the belief that God suffers), which was a major point of contention between the Christologies of Alexandria and Antioch, it is known from Cyril's statement, "Whoever does not believe that the Logos God suffered in the flesh or was crucified in the flesh will be excommunicated," that he held a form of belief that God could suffer. Nestorius, on the other hand, stated that nowhere in the New Testament is this attributed to God, but to Christ with his human and divine nature. Later, the formula "one element of the Trinity suffered in the flesh" was accepted in Constantinople in 551 under Justinian. In addition, the same emperor issued a decree in 553 stating that "whoever does not confess our Lord Jesus Christ crucified in the flesh as true God, our Lord, and an element of the Trinity, is excommunicated". All this shows that the tradition of theopaschism is strong.[324] According to Babai, this kind of thinking is heresy. He does not criticize the phrase "one of the hypostasis (knomas) of the Trinity" but rather the phrase "suffered in the flesh". For the formula of a nature and a hypostasis would inevitably lead to statements such as "God died" or "God was crucified". Babai rejects statements such as "Logos became man, was crucified, suffered and died", "the incarnate God Logos died completely", "the mighty, eternal Holy God was crucified for us", and "he was crucified and died of his own will". In this respect, he rejects all forms of theopaschism, but not all of Babai's theopaschism.

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[323] Geevarghese, The Christology of Mar Babai the Great, 66,70.
[324] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 70-75.

It is understood that he is against its use in the context.[325] Regarding Henana, whom he sometimes accuses as Severan and sometimes as Neochalonian, he says that Henana adopted a view of nature, a hypostasis and theopaschism. According to him, Henana, in saying that Christ is God and God is Christ, did not make any distinction between these two titles, the "Only-begotten Son" and the "firstborn", and considered them as one and the same. In contrast, Babai says that Christ is God (Msiha Alaha), but God (the common element of the Trinity) is not Christ. Here he clearly distinguishes between "Msiha" in the sense of the Logos, God incarnate, and a knoma in the Trinity, or the "Alaha" of the whole Trinity.[326]

Regarding the title Theotokos for Mary, Babai responds in the context of Christology to the accusations of the Monophysites and the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon against the Eastern Church for accepting Mary as the mother of an ordinary human being. He prefers the use of "Yaldat Msiha" (Christ-bearer). This is because the name Messiah signifies both his divine and human aspects. According to him, the Messiah was born of Mary in terms of his human nature. He rejects the claim that Mary gave birth to an ordinary human being, depriving her of the honor bestowed upon her and not showing her due respect, but at the same time he rejects the use of the expression "Mother of God" in the sense that the Messiah did not take anything from our nature, as it would render salvation meaningless. But he does not completely reject the use of "Yaldat Alaha" without meaning these things. For him, Mary is the mother of man by nature and the mother of God by the union realized in her womb.[327] Babai likewise rejects the claims of "two sons and a quadrilateral addition to the Trinity," then speaks strongly of the uniqueness of the Son and then proceeds to explain his own Christology.

[325] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 75-76.

[326] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 77-78.
[327] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 81.

In explaining his Christology, Babai used various terms in different categories related to the person of Christ, his two natures, the relation of the logos to man, and the union of his two natures. Here we will try to focus on the terms kyana (nature), knoma (hypostasis) and person (prosopon-parchopa) that he uses in relation to the person of Christ. Babai used the term kyana (nature) to refer to nature in the same sense as physis, the common property found among all the elements of a species, without explaining it in detail. Here, nature (kyana) is used in the abstract sense and refers to the general substance (ousia), while knoma corresponds to the concretized individual (in kind) substance. For example, he accepts the general similarities between all human species and individuals as theoretical, not actual, and calls them human nature. He used the term kyana as "kyana "nasaia" (human nature) and "kyana Alahaia" (God nature). According to him, knoma is an individual entity (substance) that exists by itself, is indivisible, numerically one and different from many. A knoma is fixed in its own nature, being among similar knomas under a species and the kyanas to which the knoma belongs, but distinct from similar knomas by virtue of the individual (singular) properties it possesses in its parchopa. Each knoma is an actual nature that is recognized and known. This nature contains the knoma common to all knomas under it. But knoma does not contain the common aspect. For Babai, it means an individual ousia as opposed to the common ousia, which includes the general. It has all the properties of the common nature, but it does not include all the individuals gathered under a common species. Since it is fixed, it cannot be added to another knoma. According to him, the human species is formed by the union of body and soul. The human body cannot be a "knoma mqayyam" (knoma existing on its own) without the human soul. Angels, on the other hand, can be knoma mqayyam because of their simple nature (psituta). The human soul or body is called knoma la mqayyam (knoma la mqayyam), which cannot exist on its own apart from each other. But with the union of these two knomas, there is a concrete

knoma that exists on its own, like Peter and Paul.

Knoma is the concrete and actualization of the abstract kyana in the form of this or that. According to him, kyana never exists outside the knoma. Prosopon, or parshopa, which is used in the sense of a person, is the totality of the characteristics and facts (reality) pertaining to an individual knoma. Babai defines parchopa (person) as the reality of the distinctive attributes that individually distinguish one knoma from other knomas. For example, although Paul and Peter are equal in kyana and knoma in having a body and soul and being fully alive and intelligent, each is distinguished from the other by means of parshopa (person) because of their indivisible singularities of age, shape, temperament, sex, etc. The person is fixed, indivisible. It is perpetuated by special and particular attributes that distinguish it, such as shape, age, temperament, knowledge, power, sonship, paternity, gender, etc. Although it is fixed, it can be assumed by another knoma. For him, knoma and parchopa correspond to the same thing for man. When we say Paul, we mean Paul's knoma and Paul's parchopa. Taken together, the knoma is similar to the rest of the members of its species in terms of kyana and different in terms of the characteristics it possesses and its parchopa. We need to keep in mind that these three terms used by Babai are not used in the same way that the Monophysites and the followers of the Council of Chalcedon used these terms.[328]

If we come to the use of these terms used by the Babai in the case of Jesus Christ, then Christ is a single parchope (person) in two kyana (two general natures) and their knomas (two individual manifestations). Jesus Christ has the divine kyana (nature) and the human kyana (nature). His divine kyana (nature) is separated from the Father and the Holy Spirit, with whom he shares the general divine nature in the Trinity, by the second element of the Trinity, the Logos/Son kyana (personal manifestation), and becomes specific and particularized. In the same way, his human kyana (nature) is distinguished from all other human beings with whom he shares the general human kyana (nature) by the Logos/Son knoma (personal manifestation), which is the second element of the Trinity.

[328] For the terms used by Babai, see Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 86-91; Sako, *Abauna's-Surian*, 167.

It becomes distinct, specific and particularized in the knoma (personal manifestation) of Jesus of Nazareth. The union of the divine kyana (nature) and its knoma of the Son and the human kyana (nature) and its knoma of Jesus of Nazareth through the incarnation gives rise to the one parchopa (person) of Jesus Christ. The parchopa (person) of Jesus Christ contains all the characteristics of these two knomas. In the case of the one person of Jesus Christ, the two knomata (the Logos and Jesus of Nazareth) do not exist independently on their own. If each knoma is independent, then Jesus Christ cannot remain a parchopa (person). These two knomata are not separate from each other, nor are they in such a combination that they transform each other. The whole endeavor of the Babai and the Church of the East has been to try to establish the relationship between the God Logos (ontologically) and the human Jesus (historically) in a person (Jesus Christ). Apart from the scroll of a person, Babai, like Nestorius, often used the terms scroll of divinity and scroll of humanity. Both the human Jesus is conceived of as a parchope (person) and the God Logos as a parchope (person), but these two persons are united in the one parchope (person) of the Son or Christ.

According to the Babai, the incarnation is the joint action of the three divine knomans in the Trinity for the salvation of humanity. In the Old Testament, "Alaha" prepared mankind for the coming of the Son, the Messiah was foreshadowed in prophecies, and in due time the promise was fulfilled.[329] According to him, his humanity is a complete human knoma, consisting of body, soul and mind, like all human beings, except for sinning. His divinity is a perfect knoma, like the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Incarnation began at the same time as the ascension of the historical Jesus to divinity and the descent of the second knoma, the God Logos.[330] According to the Babai, although he was God, he humbly took on our humanity and took up residence in the temple. Although he says that the logos humbly took on our humanity, he does not say that the logos was born of the Virgin or that the logos died. Babai, logos and

[329] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 117.
[330] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 122.

He makes a logical distinction between the Son. Until the incarnation he speaks of the logos, while after the incarnation he uses the term parchopa for the one person who appears after the union of logos and man.[331] According to him, after the incarnation, if only the term logos is mentioned, then only divinity appears. From this it is clear that his designation of Christ or Son refers to a parchopa (person) of Jesus Christ, which emerges from the union of the divine and human natures and their knoma, while logos refers to the common divine nature and knoma. According to him, the logos does not contain the human nature of Christ. But the expression Son or Christ expresses both the logos and the unity and person of the human being assumed. With this distinction, he aimed to prevent the weaknesses of Jesus Christ's human nature from being attributed to the divine logos.[332] For the incarnation of the Logos, he uses the expressions "became man" (wetbarnas), "became human" (etbasar) and "became flesh" (etgasam). According to him, "etgasam" and "etbasar" are two synonymous words. Babai understands the expressions "to take on flesh" and "to become human" as "to adopt/assume" and "to receive" (nsab).[333] Accordingly, the God Logos took on the form of the human Jesus, who was created in the Virgin's womb to be united with Him. Here, the creation of human nature in the Virgin's womb, the union of the Logos with it, and the giving of the divine scroll to it took place simultaneously with the angel's greeting to Mary. Thus, at the same time, the God Logos was revealed through human nature. According to Babai, therefore, the human nature of Christ never existed for a single moment apart from the Logos, detached from it, without union with it. Through all these simultaneous acts of incarnation, logos and man are united in the one person of the Son or Christ. However, the human nature remained perfectly human. The logos did not replace the (human) soul (of Christ), but was united with body and soul.

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[331] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 200.
[332] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 123.
[333] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 125.

united. He understands the phrase "the Logos became man and dwelt among us" as "the logos put on our human nature and dwelt in it". According to him, by putting on our human nature, the Son of God became a human being and the Only Begotten Son became the firstborn of Mary.[334]

Babai repeatedly states that Christ is the only Son. According to him, Christ is the Son in his divinity in terms of his nature, as well as in terms of his union and incarnation. He is the Son of God and the same Son formed in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. That he is Son in his humanity is not due to adoption or worship, but to unity (hadu msiha batraihen hadu bra batraihen).[335] For the Babai, the essence of unity, or unity in Christ, is in the divine scopos. The scopus of the eternal Son has taken on the human scopus formed in the womb. Except for the divine nature of the logos, which cannot be passed on or transmitted to anyone, everything that the logos has or is also belongs to the human being formed in the womb. According to him, unity does not eliminate the differences between God and man. On the contrary, the God Logos, who remains as he is, has united man with his divine scopus. At the same time, the Logos has assumed the form of the inferior man and has become him. But this was not in terms of nature, but in terms of unity. In other words, when he says that the logos became human, he does not mean that the logos became human (transformed) in terms of its nature, but only by the union of the two (in terms of unity).[336] According to him, likewise, everything that man has or is belongs to the logos through unity. From this point on, there is one Son and one Christ, and there is no distinction between the two. According to Babai, there is only one honor and one worship for Christ. Christ (Msiha) is the Son and the Son is Christ. He uses various names for the one person of Christ or the Son. The first one i s "the person of unity" (parshopa dahdaiuta). He calls the "joint person" (parshopa gawanai) the two natures united and

[334] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 127.

[335] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 128.
[336] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 128.

He used it to express the single person of their knoma. According to him, both of his knomas belong to this one person, one by nature and the other by union and adoption. This common parchopa is not the result of the union and fusion of the two natural parchpas. The name Christ is also a common parchope.[337] Babai took it from Nestorius' expression "prosopon koinon". Babai, like Nestorius, speaks of a divine and human parchopa (prosopon) apart from kyana and knoma. This common parchopa has therefore been subject to misunderstanding as a result of the merger of the two parchpas. Finally, he uses the name "person of the incarnation" (parchopa damdabranuta). The natural person (parchopa) of the Logos became the person (parchopa) of the incarnation because the Son became man. It is through this worshipped person (parchopa) of the Logos that he undertakes the whole incarnation of salvation for the renewal and redemption of humanity. The person of the incarnation is distinct from the parchope of the Father and the parchope of the Holy Spirit in that it contains in its unity a human nature. This context is also seen in Nestorius.[338]

Babai uses the unity of the Trinity to explain the Christological unity. Accordingly, the three divine knomas in the Trinity are one eternal nature, substance, and being, as well as two natures and two knomas (eternal and temporal) and one Son.[339] Just as in the Trinity the three knomas are united in one unique divine nature as one power, one will, and one dominion, retaining their own attributes without mingling, so the two knomas of Christ are united in the one parchope of the Son of God without mingling, each knoma retaining its own attributes. Just as the three divine knomata are completely one without any limitation (unum quid: had enun kul bkul), so the two knomata of Christ constitute absolute unity (unum quid: had medem).[340]

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[337] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 129.
[338] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 130.
[339] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 132.
[340] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 133.

The issue that Babai most emphasized and tried to explain in the context of the truth of the incarnation was the unity of the divine and human natures of Christ in one person, and that within this unity the two natures maintain their own characteristics without mixing or destroying each other. He insists that there is no mixing between the elements of this unity in the person of Christ. The Nestorians naturally regarded the view of the followers of Cyril concerning the one hypostasis (knoma) as the result of a confusion of natures.[341] Babai states that the God Logos became incarnate in the form of a servant, and that unity took place without any mixture, change, or addition (la mmazga "it, la hlila "it, la hbika "it, la blila "it), and in the unity of the only Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, both natures retain their particularity.[342] He gives the example of the sun to express the unmixed existence of the two natures. Accordingly, the sun has heat and light. But the air in the atmosphere does not mix with light and heat. The sun is different from heat, light and air. Each of them is different. But they are all in the same space. Although the illuminating sun, the shining light, the heat of the sun and the air are all together, there is no merging or mixing between them.[343]

From early on, the Eastern Church tradition emphasized the presence of two natures in Christ and often used the terms perfect God and perfect man for Christ.[344] According to the Babai, if he is perfect God, invisible and eternally equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit, then he is a perfect knoma, one of the knomas of the Trinity, even before the incarnation. If he is a perfect man, then he is a man with any visible human knoma. According to him, the eternal divine knoma did not become human by being transformed into a human knoma. On the contrary, the logos, by retaining the characteristics of the divine knoma, becomes the human knoma.

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[341] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 136.
[342] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 137.
[343] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 139.
[344] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 146.

The logos took on the parchopa and human characteristics continued to exist in the human knoma. According to him, if there were only one knoma after the incarnation, either the logos would be transformed by becoming human in the incarnation and the knoma would turn into a composition with the addition of the human knoma, or it would not have taken on anything from us (human beings). For Babai, neither situation is possible and there is no alternative but the unity of the two knomata. For him, this is the only way to explain the perfect divinity and perfect humanity in Christ. Only in this way can Christ be revealed as both visible and invisible, both clothed and unclothed, both God form and servant form. Thus, it can be made clear that he suffered and died in his human nature, but did not suffer and die in his divine nature. According to him, the fact that Christ has duality in terms of his natures and knoma, and that they retain their own characteristics, does not mean that his human knoma is independent. Although knoma has been defined as a singular, individual being, existing on its own, Christ's human knoma was never for a moment a separate being from the person of unity.[345] According to the Babai, the parchope (person) of divinity belongs to the logos, even though it is a purely human knoma. The human knoma, from the moment of its conception in the womb of the holy virgin, has been assumed by the God Logos and has received the divine parchope of the logos. Human nature therefore has no autonomy or independence. It exists in the parchope of monotheism, united with the logos. Babai also says that kyana has no existence and exists only like knoma. For him, human nature and divine nature imply two knoma, two realities, two truths versus illusion and delusion. The two knomas signify the presence of two truths in Christ.[346]

Babai makes a distinction between nature and unity. According to him, what is inherent to divinity by nature (such as the divine sonship scroll) is inherent to humanity by unity.

[345] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 148.
[346] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 149.

is unique to the logos by virtue of unity. Likewise, what is inherent to humanity by nature (such as the anointing) is inherent to the logos by unity. Divine sonship and anointing belong to one Son. He is the Son of God and the Son of Mary. One Christ and one Son: God incarnate and God-man (had msiha had bra: Alaha de "tbarnas; ubarnasa de "ta "lah). Babai makes a distinction between the names to be used before and after the incarnation. According to him, like natures united in one scroll, names are likewise united in one scroll. Although there are certain names that are inherent to each nature, they are always attributed to the one Christ. According to him, Son, Logos, God, Only Begotten Son, Light, Life, God-form are names that pertain to divinity before it is united with our nature, and these names are used for Christ. But these terms cannot be used in cases of bodily weakness. But sometimes they can be used in relation to the Son, who is the prosopon of unity.[347] Jesus, Christ, child, firstborn, emanuel, man, son of man, king, son of David, son of the Most High, firstborn of all creation, firstborn from the dead, priest, prophet, Adam, etc., are names used for the Son after the union has taken place. Here Babai makes a distinction between the names for the Son and the logos. According to him, these two types of designations can be used for the only Son without any reserve, but not all of them can be used for the logos. In the same way, all these names can be used for Christ as "Christ was born and died" but not for the logos as "Logos was born, suffered and died". The logos of God wants to make the distinction between God and man, between divinity and humanity, even though he has appropriated a human being for his own parchope of divinity. According to Babai, although the two are closest to each other in unity, this does not mean that the characteristics of the two natures are mixed. God and man are not one and the same, nor are humanity and divinity identical. The logos that embodies/embodies and the human being that is embodied/embodied; the form of God and

[347] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 150.

The human (servant) form is different. However, in the post-incarnational union, there is no mixture of the unique characteristics of the two natures, nor do the two natures destroy each other's characteristics. God and man are united in one Son.[348] In this respect, according to him, the duality found in Christ does not mean two sons.

To summarize what has been said so far, it is understood that there is a mutual giving and receiving in the single scroll of divinity. The Logos manifested in the human parchope by adopting/receiving the humble parchope from the Virgin's womb, and at the same time the human received the sublime parchope of the divine logos and became its parchope. The Logos assumed it, made it his own, and revealed himself to human beings in this humble scroll. According to Babai, giving or appropriating did not end in a third parchopa, as some people think. For him, receiving and giving are not two equal things. There is a great gulf between receiving and receiving. It is the God Logos who adopts/adopts and the human knoma that is adopted/adopted. Since the exchange does not occur at the parchopa level, the two natures and their knomas remain as they are, without any mixture or composition. According to Babai, there are not two sons because of the mention of two knomas. Kyana exists just like the knomata. According to him, if there are two natures in Christ, there must be two knomas: The concrete reality of the two kyanas. They remain as they are without any change or mixture. God is eternally united in the one parchment of the divine sonship of the Logos. Babai found the unity of Christ in the parchope of the divine sonship and duality in the kyana and their corresponding knomata. According to him, there is a son and he is God and man, possessing perfect divinity and perfect humanity.

Babai interprets the key stages of Christ's life - birth, baptism, death and resurrection - in order to build his Christology. With the birth of Christ

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[348] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 151.

He states that with the angel's greeting to Mary, Jesus' human nature was formed in the womb by the Holy Spirit, and at that very moment the God Logos was united with this body.[349] According to Babai, what was formed in the womb was a fetus, a human being or a piece of flesh. However, after forty days it was given a soul and became a human being. He interprets the statements of the Catechism of the Council of Nicaea regarding the incarnation as successive resuscitation and uses them as evidence. In the context of the incarnation, he interprets the forty-day-old fetus as a human being because of the use of the phrase "became a human being" (wetbarnas) after the first phrases "manifested" (etgasam) or "became a human being" (etbasar), and as a reasonable human being after the human soul merged with the fetus after forty days.[350] Thus, before the creation of the human soul (soul, emotion, intellect, sensation) and before the fetus became a human being, the logos became the body when it united with the body and took it into its own parchope. According to him, from this moment onward, there is one sovereignty and one worship of the God Logos. After the fortieth day of gestation, the soul of Jesus followed the same natural course as other human beings. According to him, it did not pre-exist, as Origenist thought says.[351] It became a soul by undergoing the forty-day process of evolution that all child bodies undergo in order to become a body. According to Babai, although flesh (besra-gusma) is created by the forty days, it is not a body (body/pagra) in the full sense.[352] The soul (nafs) created on the fortieth day participated in the union of the logos and the fetus that took place earlier. In this respect, Babai opposes the ideas that the union takes place on the fortieth day after the creation of the soul, after baptism in the Jordan River, or after the resurrection. According to him, from the moment of union, the logos was never separated from the soul and body, including at the moment of death on the cross. Apparently the body

[349] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 155. The angel's greeting, Luke, 1/28-30.
[350] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 157.

[351] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 156.
[352] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 158. footnote 19.

There is no pure human being at the time of reception. In the first step, the logos adopted the body (fetus) and then the soul; it did not first unite with a human being, but with a human being in the fetal state.[353] According to Babai, although the logos unites only with the body (fetus) in the first step, there is no second union with the soul (spirit). The soul is created within this unity. Unity happened once and this unity is eternal. Babai uses the word "wal "alam" to express this eternity. For this he refers to the following sentence in the New Testament: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Yesu" msiha etmali uyaumana uhuyu wal "alam)."[354] According to Babai, another important act that takes place at the moment of union is that at the same moment that the Holy Spirit forms the body in the womb of the Virgin, he also anoints it with holy oil.[355] Thus the body is made ready to receive the logos. In the blink of an eye with the angel's greeting, the forming of the body, the anointing with holy oil, the assumption and the union all took place at the same time. Babai relates these actions of the Holy Spirit to the priest's simultaneous transformation of bread and wine into the flesh and blood of Christ in his invocation of the Holy Spirit during the sacrificial rite. In the same way, according to him, at the voice of the angel, the Holy Spirit comes and the power of Almighty God is transferred to the one who receives the sacrifice.[356] Concerning the growth and development of Christ, Babai says that it follows a natural course like the birth and development of all other children. According to him, his humanity (his human nature) was gradually perfected in all that is proper to human beings except sinning. Only at the resurrection is it fully perfected. Statements such as Christ was hungry, wept in the tomb, was comforted by angels, was angry, slept, died, was buried, and ascended a p p l y to his human nature. G o d Logos who became man,

[353] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 159.
[354] Hebrews, 13/8; Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 162.
[355] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 160.
[356] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 161.

It has not been subjected to any change. With the union of the Logos with the human body, divinity has perfected humanity in the process of development and perfection.[357]

Babai's controversial Christology is evident in his interpretation of the birth of Christ. According to him, in the Gospel of John, in the sentence "The God Logos became man and dwelt among us"[358] , "became" refers to the "body" and "dwelt among us" refers to the "logos". When speaking of the birth of Christ and the Son, he recognizes only one birth for the logos, the eternal birth from the Father. As for the birth from the Virgin, he refers to it as the birth of the Messiah, or the lineage of Jesus Christ from Abraham to Mary[359] as it is mentioned in the Gospels. For him it is the same Son who was born of the Father before the incarnation and the same Son who was born of the Virgin after the incarnation. Even though he attributes the birth (lineage) to the body, he does not mention the birth (lineage) of the logos. The Logos appears only in the divine nature. But the Son appears in both natures and in Babai's parchment with its Antiochian background.[360]

Babai mentions two acts of anointing, one at the incarnation and the other at the Jordan River. The first anointing mentioned above relates to the Christological context. The second anointing is used in the context of the church and salvation. According to him, Christ's human nature, although united with the logos from the very beginning, has not reached the highest stage of perfection. He had a delicate and mortal human nature that followed the normal course of development of all children.[361] In this respect, Christ, the New Adam, does not know that he is born in immortality and immutability. He had to grow with wisdom. For him, he was truth because the Father and the Holy Spirit were with him from the beginning (not united). He was filled with spirit from the beginning. Its manifestation and revelation was gradual. Because he is in every

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[357] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 163-164.
[358] John, 1/14.
[359] Matthew, 1/1.

[360] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 164.
[361] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 165.

Like a child, He was ignorant and lacked many things that He would later acquire. Babai states that Christ did not receive any additional anointing oil at His baptism. For him, the descent of the Spirit should not be understood as coming from above. There was a special manifestation of the Spirit in baptism. His baptism should be seen as a pledge (hmyra-rehin) of immortality and immutability of his human nature. Babai mentions the pledge of immortality in several places. According to him, it was after the appearance of the Spirit that Christ began to preach the Kingdom of God and to spread the gospel. That he was filled with the Spirit means that power and might were revealed to humanity and the pledge of immortality was given to him. This is a spiritual birth for humanity, or a revelation and manifestation of the Trinity.[362] According to Babai, John's baptism was a baptism of repentance and the sinless Christ did not need it. But with this baptism He received the mystery of spiritual birth and immortality. With this second anointing, Christ became the head of the church and its faithful members, and in him we are baptized and receive the name Christian. Babai states that in baptism Christians mysteriously ("razana "it) receive a commitment to be received into life as the fruit of immortality for the salvation of their bodies through the grace of the Holy Spirit. According to him, Christ thus becomes the one who grants immortality to those who believe in him. He forgives sins and gives spiritual sonship. Christ's human nature became the Son with the logos, not through adoption, but through assumption/adoption and union.[363] For him it was for us that he was baptized in the Jordan, that he became the first-born of many brethren and our head, and that he granted immortality to those of us who believe in him. The fact that he states here that Christ can only be seen as the Son of God in union with the logos because he fully retains the characteristics of human nature is significant in showing how sensitive he is to the recognition of human nature as God. As it is understood from these statements

[362] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 166.
[363] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 167.

Babai considers biblical statements not only symbolic but also dogmatic.

Another important issue that Babai is concerned with is the death of Christ. He opposes the Monophysites and the New Chalcedonians in his understanding of Theopaschism (suffering God). According to him, Jesus Christ is God and man in the one divine scroll before and after his crucifixion and death. He rejects those who claim that at the crucifixion the divinity left him and only man was crucified, or that Christ's divinity was crucified and his humanity was only an illusion.[364] According to him, at the moment of death his divinity (divine nature) was not separated from his humanity (human nature). When Babai says, "Christ was crucified and died," he means Christ's human nature. Since death is the separation of body and soul, in Christ's death on the cross, his human soul was separated from his body. In this respect, Christ died as every human being dies. According to him, since Christ is God and man, it is correct to say that "Christ was crucified and died" in the sense of the crucifixion of human nature. Just as the death of Christ is spoken of, the death of the Son can also be spoken of, since he is the one and unique divine scroll: "The Son suffered in His human nature and was crucified" (bra eztleb uhas bakianeh nasaia). In this case only a human being, his humanity taken from us, died for us. But his divine nature was not crucified, did not suffer, and did not die. Therefore, the words crucifixion, suffering and death cannot be used for the logos. According to him, since the human nature after the union is contained in a divine scroll, the suffering and dying of humanity can also be expressed as the suffering and dying of the Son.[365] This is due to the understanding of Christology, which sees duality in the natures present in their own natures and unity in the single parchope of the logos. In this way, all weaknesses are attributed to the fully human and have no effect on the divine logos.

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[364] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 168.
[365] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 169.

does not. But since human nature has no existence separate from the logos and independent of its parchope, these weaknesses are attributed to the Son and Christ, who contain both natures.[366] According to him, when Christ was nailed to the cross, when his soul was separated from his body, and when he was in the tomb for three days, divinity (divine nature) was neither separated from his soul nor from his body.[367]

One of the most important phases of Babai's Christology that explains his understanding of salvation is the resurrection of Christ after his death with a perfect human nature or body. He first rejects those who say that divinity (divine sonship) becomes perfect after the resurrection. According to him, it had already received perfection with the angel's salutation, that is, from the first moment when the logos began to unite with human nature. In this respect, divinity or unity was not realized gradually. Babai also rejects those who deny the material body or who do not accept the resurrection of the body. Since the full resurrection of Christ's body is important for salvation Christology, he uses two terms for the body. He uses the word "pagra" (body) in the sense that the body exists as a whole with its limbs and organs. In this regard, he distinguishes between "gusma", which means matter, substance, and "besra", which means a piece of flesh. He uses the terms "gusma" (etgasam) and "besra" (etbasar) to refer to a forty-day-old fetus, and "pagra" for a full-fledged body.[368] The Old Testament uses the word pagra in the context of the death of the body, while the New Testament uses it in the context of the body being alive. According to Babai, the body on the cross, the body buried and the body resurrected are the same body. Accordingly, the Jews crucified Jesus of Nazareth, his spirit left his body, he died and was buried in a tomb. Three days later the body was resurrected and reunited with the soul. According to him, the body

[366] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 170.

[367] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 171.
[368] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 172.

At his resurrection all the limbs were perfectly in their places.[369] In Babai's Christology of salvation, through the resurrection Christ's human nature received immortality and perfection in the unity of his person. After his resurrection he appeared to his disciples and showed them that he had risen in the flesh and was not a ghost. In this way, he wanted to avoid the belief in the minds of his disciples that he would die again after his resurrection, like Lazarus or other prophets. Babai points to various miracles in the scriptures to show that Jesus Christ rose from the dead with his true body and human nature, and that this human nature will be with him eternally. According to him, the "Tabor Incident" (Jesus' Glorious Appearance on the Mount) in Matthew 17/1-10 is a mysterious proof (tahwita razana "it) that points to this and is not a dream or illusion. Babai refers to the phrase in Luke 24/30 where Christ, after His resurrection, took bread and ate it, even though He did not need bread because His body had received immortality.[370] Babai compares the miracle of the resurrection of the body with three miracles that took place with the mortal body before death. These are;

1- The Messiah is born of a virgin and virginity is not broken.

2. Walking on water.

3. The miracle of Tabor (Jesus' glorious appearance on the mountain).

Although all this took place in his material and mortal body, it was done by divine power and by this he wanted to show his disciples the future nature of his body. Miracles after the resurrection:

1- Do not leave the room (tomb) with the door closed.

2- Nail marks on the resurrected body.

3- Don't eat bread after the resurrection.

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[369] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 173-174.
[370] Luke, 24/30: "While sitting at table with them, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them". Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 176-178.

4 - Putting on clothes after the Resurrection.[371]

According to him, with the miracles in his material and mortal body before his death, he wanted to show that he was not an ordinary human being and that divinity was united with him; with the miracles after the resurrection, he wanted to show that he was resurrected in his own body. Christ, united with his human nature, sits at the right hand of God and will come in the same way to judge the living and the dead.[372] In Babai's Christology, the idea that the mortal human nature before the resurrection is eternal after the resurrection is very important for salvation. For the fact that Christ's human nature is eternal in union with his divinity suggests that other people will also be resurrected with their bodies and can ascend to divinity. If his human nature is not given such a role, then human salvation will not be possible.

Babai's Christology is a parsopic Christology based on Diodore of Tarsus and reflects the diophysite Antiochian Christology. It emphasizes the divine parchos (person) of the logos. For the pre-incarnation he uses the term logos, while for the post-incarnation he uses the term parchope of the Son or Christ. According to him, the God Logos adopted a human nature for his divine parchope and appeared and acted through it. Since the adoption of the human nature and the union are simultaneous, the human nature, although it is a perfect knoma like every human being, has not for a moment been separated from the Logos and has not had an independent existence. Christ's human nature therefore exists only in the parchment of the logos and is never separated from it. Christ's use of the term human for human nature does not imply a divine duality, but the human reality that is embraced and embraced. In this respect, the two-knoma crystallology emphasizes the preservation of both the two natures and the particularities of their knomas in order to prevent their mixing and thus the emergence of a composite.

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[371] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 179-182.
[372] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 183.

He wanted to unite both natures and their knomas in the one parchope (person) of the Christ or the Son, thus preventing them from being separate and independent. In this Christology, there is no Christology of two sons, two Christs, or two persons. As seen in Babai's analysis of some of the key events of Christ's life, the ultimate person to whom all references are made is the scroll of divinity (divine sonship) of the logos in which his human scroll is embedded. Although human nature is mortal before the resurrection, after the resurrection it will be immortal and eternally in the scroll of the divinity of the logos. This makes the salvation of humanity possible.

Isho'yab Jidali II explains his christological views in a letter about the person of Jesus Christ that he sent to Abraham of Beth Madai, a priest at the Batnaya Monastery near Nineveh, when he was bishop of Balad (Old Mosul) around 620.[373] It is clear from this letter that during this period many in the Eastern Church were confused about the two knoma views. In the introduction to his letter, Isho "yab II, after mentioning that God created Adam from the dust of the ground and created his wife (woman) from his rib, states that two separate bodies emerged from one body and that the human race was derived from their union. According to him, since all humanity emerged from Adam's one body, it can be said that all human beings also emerged from a single knoma and therefore all humanity is one. When Cain shed the blood of his brother Abel, the earth was polluted and the world was filled with division and enmity. So God, the merciful God, sent His only begotten Son to save us from these sins.[374] In the discussions on the person of Christ and the two natures of Christ, Iso "yab II writes that Severus (of Antioch) followed the views of the ancient heretics in confessing one nature and one knoma in Christ, and that by this v i e w , he was making a composite of the divine and human natures.

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[373] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 19.
[374] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 24.

Christ in the one person of Christ. According to him, at the Council of Nicaea, two natures (divine and human) and two knomata were recognized in the one person of Christ.[375] Nevertheless, although those who gathered at the Council of Chalcedon acted with the intention of presenting the true faith, they strayed from the path of truth. They further muddied the issue with their weak and unintelligible statements. According to him, they preserved the true faith by saying that there are two natures in Christ, but they attracted weak souls with the expression "one knoma" (hypostasis). However, they refuted the principle of "two natures" with the expression "one knoma" and likewise refuted "one knoma" with the expression "two natures". According to Isho "yab II, they were therefore at a crossroads. According to him, many knoma exist in one nature. However, no one had ever heard of the case where several natures existed in only one knoma.[376] After these statements, Iso "yab II begins to define the terms knoma, kyana and parshopa. After giving the definitions of kyana and knoma by Greek philosophers, grammarians and church fathers, he quotes from the Old and New Testaments to say that knoma means individual substance, the same nature. For Isho "yab II, the general substance is the Syriac term kyana (nature), which is used in the sense of the Greek term ousia. The individual substance, on the other hand, is the Greek term knoma, which is used for the Greek term hypostasis. Therefore, the common substance (kyana) and the individual substance (knoma) are used in the context of the Greek terms ousia and hypostasis; the common substance (kyana-ousia) refers to the common element among a species, while the individual substance (knoma-hypostasis) means an individual manifestation of this common substance. According to him, in this case, the formula of one knoma (hypostasis) and two natures of the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon is contradictory. It should have been either one knoma and one nature or two knomas and two natures. Because the human knoma is a substitute for the divine knoma.

[375] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali,* 28-29.
[376] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 29-30. In fact, Severus of Antioch makes similar criticisms of the Christology of the Council of Chalcedon, although from a different point of view. According to Severus,

a knoma (hypostasis) logically points to a physis/kyana. See Brock, "The Christology of the Church of East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries", 130-132; "The Christology of the Church of the East", 168-169; "The Church of the East in the Sassanid Empire until the Sixth Century", 92; "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 100-101.

and the divine knoma is lowered to the human knoma. If both knomas are considered one knoma, then a composite knoma (hypostasis) is formed. According to him, knoma cannot exist without nature (kyana). In this case, without human nature, human knoma cannot arise. Likewise, divine knoma cannot be understood without divine nature. Therefore, knoma is an individual/special substance (hypostasis). The value of the individual substance is greater than the value of the general substance. This is because the general substance (kyana) is abstract and exists only as a form in the mind. It comes into existence only if the knoma or knomas unite with it.[377] It is clear from these explanations that for Iso "yab II, if the Messiah is to be co-substantial with both the Father and humanity, he must take a strong diophysite position. If the existence of two natures is accepted, then it must also be recognized that each nature has a knoma. According to him, if one knoma is accepted, this logically leads to one substance (kyanā). In reality, a human being does not have two human substances (kyana). Each human being has one individual substance (knoma) and the individual substance cannot be divided. Therefore, there cannot be a created substance and an uncreated substance, a limited substance and an unlimited substance.[378] With these words, he rejects the formula of the Council of Chalcedon that unites the two natures of Jesus Christ in one knoma (hypostasis). After finishing his criticism of the single knoma, Iso "yab II focuses on the two natures. According to him, when it is said that we believe in two natures in Christ, it is very important to determine whether these natures are individual natures (knoma-hypostasis) or common natures (kyana-ousia). If one says that the two are common natures, then is not the Trinity united with humanity? According to him, this is complete madness. If both natures are regarded as individual, then individual nature already means knoma. According to him, in this case the issue is very clear. God's knoma, logos, is united with our human knoma.[379]

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[377] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 32.

[378] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 32.
[379] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 33.

Continuing with the Incarnation, according to Isho "yab II, the human knoma was not first brought into being and then merged with it. Rather, the acts of creation, ascension, and union took place simultaneously. The logos did not unite with the (human) nature and knoma in order to develop and perfect it, but only in order to be manifested through it. In the same way, according to him, the logos acquired its human nature not for its destruction, but to realize the salvation of humanity. Therefore, anyone who destroys the human nature of Christ denies the plan of salvation. Isho "yab II states that the sublime secret of the Trinity is hidden and unknown to creatures, and that it is impossible to discover this secret through an ordinary creature. This is because the image of God that He had implanted in our nature had been ravaged by sin. Therefore, God can appear to humanity through a knoma of the Messiah and save them.[380]

Isho "yab II rejects the idea of the God Logos becoming flesh. According to him, the descent and incarnation of the God Logos does not mean that he becomes a man, nor can man become a deity in the person of God. If the transformation of the two natures into each other is accepted, both natures would be corrupted. In this case, he states that both natures are united in one person without destroying each other. According to him, the presence of two natures in Christ, divine and human, does not mean that there are two Sons or two Messiahs, just as the presence of a soul and a body in a human being does not mean that there are two human beings. The two natures of Christ are inseparably united in one person, and the divine nature will be eternally manifested in his human nature without transformation.[381] According to him, the person (parchopa) was created by divine wisdom for the revelation of the divine nature (lahut) in man (nasut) and the salvation of humanity through the divine nature. The person is the eternally inseparable union of the image of the Lord and the image of the servant. Isho "yab II says that although the Messiah is one person, he is actually manifested in two realities and forms. The exalted one down from heaven and the exalted one from earth to heaven.

[380] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 33-34.
[381] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 35-37.

the ascending servant. According to him, God did not lose his nature when he descended, nor did the servant lose his nature when he ascended.[382] He states that during the union, they believe that humanity is raised up to the person of God Logos in order to manifest glory in humanity, and divinity descends to the human person in order to manifest humility in divinity. According to him, there is no other person for the two natures except the one common person of Christ.[383] In this respect, he says that if divinity is said to be revealed in its own particular person and likewise humanity in its own particular person, then there is no such thing as unity. The person of Christ is one and unites the two natures in himself without mixing. According to him, Emanuel, when considering the words "God with us," if they refer only to his divine nature, where would the phrase "with us" be placed? If it is applied only to his human nature, then where does the word "God" go? Isho "yab II says that "with us" refers to his humanity and "God" refers to his divinity. According to him, the Bible says, "No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven. The Son of Man was in heaven"[384] explains that the two words above refer to a single person (parchopa). If God were the Logos, then it would not be possible to call the creator of mankind the Son of Man. If it is said to refer to man, it is never heard that man was in heaven or descended from there. If he had been in heaven, he could not have spoken these words to his disciples. For him, to say that "God is the one who descended from heaven and is called the Son of Man as a person because of the union" would be a contradiction to the statement that "God did not descend, but man was raised to divinity."[385] Isho "yab II says that God clearly taught the mystery surrounding His supreme divinity, declaring that His human and divine natures were united in one person. According to him, by saying "the Son of Man who is in heaven" he substitutes his divine nature for his human nature. Likewise, when he says, "The Son of Man ascends to heaven, where he was before.

[382] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 42-44.
[383] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 48
[384] John, 6/62.
[385] Sako, *al-Batrik Iso "yab al-Jidali*, 49-50.

You see," substituting his human nature for his divine nature. Iso "yab II says, "This is my body that I sacrifice for the salvation of the world", "I am the bread of life that has come down from heaven. The bread I will give is my own body. Through it people will have eternal life."[386] etc. He states that he names the body of Christ as bread. Based on these sentences, Isho "yab II emphasizes the reality of the two natures in Christ, divine and human, and insists that they are preserved in the one person of Christ without transforming each other.[387]

4.8. Christology of the Islamic Period

Although the two-knoma formula was largely accepted after the Eastern Church came under Muslim rule, some theologians and bishops within the Eastern Church continued to oppose it. Kuryakos, bishop of Nusaybin, began to propose a one-knoma Christology in the 640s, but with his death the controversy ceased. Soon, however, during the Catholicosates of Marameh and Isho'yab III, Martyrius Sahdona, bishop of Mahoza d-Arewan (in Beth Germai), and his followers began to oppose the two-knoma formula. There are different opinions as to whether Martyrius Sahdona was a follower of the Henana Christology or whether he defended the Christology of the Council of Chalcedon within the Eastern Church.[388] By the end of the VIIth century, however, opposition to the two-knoma formula seems to have ended. With the Muslim domination of the region, discussions on Jesus Christ began to take place between Muslim and Christian theologians. In the debate between Timotheos I (727-823), the catholicos of the Nestorian Church, and the Abbasid caliph Mahdi, the person of Jesus Christ became an important issue.

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[386] John, 6/51.
[387] Sako, *al-Batrik Isho "yab al-Jidali*, 50.
[388] Abramowski - Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts,* 2/106; Reinink, "Tradition", 220, footnote 34; Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 28, 210-211; Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifty to Early Seventh Centuries", 128; Miller, "A Brief Historical and Theological Introdection", 508- 510.

became one of his topics. In response to Caliph Mahdi's words, "O Catholicos, it is unworthy of a wise man like you to say that God took a wife and had a child by her", Timotheos replied: "Who can slander God in such a way?" To the question, "Who then is Christ?" he answers that Christ is the logos of God manifested in the flesh to save men.[389] He then states that Christ's sonship is not a corporeal sonship, but an eternal, divine sonship, a mystery whose nature cannot be comprehended. He was eternally begotten of the Father. We believe in the way it is expressed in the Bible. When the Caliph says, "But you say that he was born of Mary," he replies that Jesus was eternally born of the Father as the "word" (logos), and that he was born of the Virgin Mary in a certain period of time without any sexual intercourse and without any harm to her virginity.[390] Timotheus I then explains the Christian views on the eternal and temporal nature of Christ and the nature of Jesus as follows:

> The "Messiah" has two natures. One temporal and one eternal. His human nature was born of Mary in time, while his eternal nature was with God as the Word. This eternal word acquired his human body and became man. Nevertheless, according to us, there are not two sons and two Messiahs. But he is one Christ and one son. This is just as man is one in form, although he is composed of a body and a soul."

Upon this, Caliph Mahdi asked: "How is it that God is his father but not his god, and at the same time his god but not his father?" Timotheus I answers that he is his god in relation to his human nature and his father in relation to his divine nature.[391] When Caliph Mahdi asked, "Did the Messiah pray and prostrate himself towards Jerusalem during his lifetime?" Timotheos I replied, "Yes, that is true." He was then asked by the Caliph, "But how does a deity pray and prostrate himself?" Timotheos I replied, "Christ did not do these things in his divine capacity. He did these things with his human nature.

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[389] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmiyye*, 27.
[390] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 29.
[391] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 30-31.

He did it," he answers.[392] To Caliph Mahdi's question, "How did Christ die on the cross? Can God die?" to which he replied, "His human nature died, not his divine nature. His death took place in his human nature. But death is attributed to his divine nature."[393] The debates between the Caliph and Timotheos I reflect the general Muslim and Christian perceptions of Jesus Christ.

Ammar al-Basri, one of the most important theologians of the Nestorian Church, emphasizes the wrong perception of Jesus Christ in the Muslim mind. In this context, responding to Muslim criticism of the corruption of the Gospels and their excesses about Jesus Christ, he says that if the apostles or the Gospel writers were excessive about Christ, they should not have reported his obvious human weaknesses such as his childhood, birth, upbringing, eating, drinking and dying.[394] According to him, the human body of Christ is the covering and manifestation of the God Logos and cannot be thought of as God's adoption of a wife or child. It is a spiritual birth.[395] Ammar al-Basri tries to overemphasize the humanity of Jesus Christ. According to him, the visible (corporeal) and invisible (spiritual) beings among the creations of God's generosity (jawdat) are divided into three types: Spiritual beings as a living and speaking species; inanimate beings such as earth, sky, air, water, fire, etc.; and human beings, who, unlike all these, are created by the combination of both corporeal and spiritual elements. According to him, the elements of the four elements are united in the human body, and with their union with the soul, it was created to contain and represent all beings.[396] Ammar al-Basri lists four reasons for God's manifestation (incarnation) in the form of a human being: First, the human form of God in the incarnation enables humanity to comprehend, receive and appreciate this revelation. Because knowing God (marifatullah) is innately human, like instinct in animals.

does not exist in existence. When a bee makes honey or a spider spins its web, it is instinctive.

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[392] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 38-39.
[393] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 47.

[394] Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 117-118.
[395] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 72.
[396] Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 386-387.

and knows what to do. But the knowledge of God is not instinctively present in man in this way. The God Logos had already been manifested to Moses in the fire of the tree, to Elijah in the cloud, to the Israelites in the Ark of the Covenant, and to the prophets in the form of angels. According to him, he has also manifested for us in the form of a human being. Tajsud is necessary for God to make Himself known to us, and only in this way can we know Him better. Second, man has an insatiable desire to see God. God became visible in response to man's desire to see Him with the material eye. Third, there is an argument about God's justice, according to which God wished to appear to people through the incarnation so that when He judges them He would not cause any injustice. Just as the judge sees the judged, the judged must s e e the judge. Fourthly, according to him, God wished to include us humans in his divine glory.[397]

Ammar al-Basri, with his words "We call the Word of God the Son, as the Bible tells us, we do not say that the Word of God is a body", tries to reveal the "erroneous" understanding of Christ by Muslims who, from their point of view, perceive Christ's sonship as only a human and physical sonship.[398] Basri thinks that the false understanding of Christ by the Jacobites was influential in the formation of this understanding of Christ in Muslims' perception, and he refers to their ideas about the "Mother of God" in this regard. According to him, the fact that the Jacobites, according to their understanding of the incarnation, expressed Christ as one nature (kyana) and one knoma (hypostasis) further strengthens this misperception. In this respect, God is trying to show that the Logos does not become man, but is only manifested in him.[399] Another issue that Ammar al-Basri emphasizes is the diophysite nature of Jesus Christ. He emphasizes the d i f f e r e n c e between the divine and human natures and the human

[397] Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 388- 392; Sako, *Hivārat Mesiḥiyya-Islamīyya*, 73.
[398] Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 204

[399] Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 400.

He tries to change the perception of Muslims with the attribution of nature. According to him, although human beings are composed of soul and body, spiritual or physical actions can be attributed interchangeably. For example, the attributes of life and speech, which are vital for the existence of the soul, are attributed to the body, and bodily actions such as eating and drinking are attributed to the soul even though the body is actually meant. However, the attribution of bodily actions to the soul does not mean that the soul is affected by bodily actions. Likewise, the human actions of Jesus Christ are attributed to the incarnate logos of God. According to him, this does not mean that Jesus Christ's bodily weaknesses affected the Logos.[400] It is possible to say that these debates contributed to the Muslims' knowledge of the christological formulas of the Christian sects and their disagreements about Jesus Christ and the incarnation. Despite Muslim criticism of the prostration to the holy cross, Basri tries to explain the importance of the cross of Christ in the context of the divine plan of salvation. According to him, the holy cross alleviates the fear and anxiety inherited by man because of sin. By his death on the cross, Christ took away the sin inherited from Adam and his death was public so that everyone could see that he had died. By his resurrection from the dead, he gave people confidence and trust that they would rise again in human form, just like him. Because Christ overcame death on the cross, the cross is a symbol of God's power.[401] Catholicos Mikikha I (1092-1109) also described the human and divine nature of Jesus Christ as "He is both the garment and the wearer (divinity). He is both the veil and the veiled. The knoma of his nasut (body) is visible to the eye, the knoma of his lahut (divinity) is known by reason". Regarding the union, he evaluates that "The pain of the nasut does not affect the lahut, just as the force of speech is heard by sound and written by writing."[402]

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[400] Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 233-234.
[401] Mikhail, *"Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 400-402.
[402] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 89.

Abdullah b. Tayyib, a prominent theologian of the Nestorian Church, expresses his views on Christology in many of his works and treatises. In his work *al-Ittihād,* he states that God sent many prophets to reform and redeem the fallen humanity due to Adam's sin. According to him, after the revelation of the impossibility of correcting the fallen human nature through human beings (prophets), God prepared a design (incarnation) to save humanity. He sees the reason for the incarnation as the Creator's wish to redeem humanity, which had fallen because of Adam's sin, out of His sublime grace and mercy. According to this scheme, the eternal Son had to be manifested on earth for the salvation of humanity to be realized. However, since the eternal Son (logos) is not a sentient and corporeal being, he took on a human person, merged with him, and manifested in the world through him. Thus, according to Ibn Tayyib, the eternal was united with the immaterial. The union was realized only by the Son, who is the hypostasis of the Trinity, and the other two hypostases (the Father and the Holy Spirit) did not participate in this union.[403]

Abdullah b. Tayyib, in his work *Ta'didu Arā'i'n-Nās fi'-Ittihād wa Hujjjatuhum,* on the one hand tries to explain the Christology of the Nestorian Church and on the other hand criticizes the Christological views of the Melkites (supporters of the Council of Chalcedon) and the Jacobites (Monophysites). According to him, the substances (natures) in Jesus Christ, like the hypostases, continue to exist as they are. Unity is realized in the divine attribute of sonship (hassa), which is self-consciousness. The person from Mary (Jesus) participated in this attribute together with God (logos). Through this attribute, he did not become a substance (kyana/nature) or an uknum (hypostasis), but rather a Christ and a Son. According to him, if it is accepted that both substances (nature) are united, then the nature of both substances will be disrupted and Christ will be neither man nor God. In order for him to be both man and God at the same time, he would have to be both, like his two hypostases.

[403] Kuhn, *Defending*, 161-162, 165; Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 78.

Its substance (nature) must also remain unchanged. Therefore, union is a union realized in the divine sonship attribute (hassa). It is not possible for an already created substance (human nature) to unite with an eternal being (God Logos). Even if such a union were accepted, it would be neither material nor eternal. If it is accepted that the two natures are mixed in Christ, the result is neither God nor man. But Christ is both God and man. If one accepts the mixing of both natures, one nature and one uknum, then the abominable belief arises that "God is an eternal creature". Therefore, the view that the two natures and the two intelligences continue to exist after their unity protects them from being mixed and compounded (mezj).[404]

According to 'Abdullah b. Tayyib, when humanity and divinity are mixed into a single nature, the spiritual becomes corporeal and the corporeal becomes spiritual. According to him, the union of the two (al-mujtamaa") should be defined as two substances and two uknum. In this way, the view of two natures and two uknum in one son eliminates all abominable beliefs. If the two natures do not retain their being and mix, then divinity and humanity are lost, in such a way that they cannot be defined as God and man. According to him, the Christian law rejects this. For in the angel's greeting to Mary, "Blessed among women, our Lord is with you," it is not God who is meant, but man. What was taken from Mary was not united with her. Therefore they are not one nature but two natures. According to him, if this is not accepted, then the birth, the cross, and the other acts imply that he (divinity) was affected by them, which is not possible for God, who is never affected by anything. Therefore, there are two natures in Christ, the unaffected divine nature and the affected human nature. Ibn Tayyib says that Jesus Christ said, "To my father and your father; to my God and your God.

[404] Kuhn, *Defending*, 166-167.

I ascend"[405] or "My God" and "To your God" expresses that the creator has an essence other than his essence. For God does not ascend to God. Therefore, there are two natures and two essences in Christ, one that ascends (to God) and one that is ascended to him. According to him, Christ's eating, drinking, and crucifixion for our salvation are attributed to his humanity, not his divinity. If the two natures are preserved intact, then the two uknum are also preserved intact. For if the uknum is not preserved, the nature cannot be preserved. When Jesus Christ calls himself "Son of Man" and at the same time says that he and the Father are one, it is clear that after union he identifies himself as both man and deity. If the two natures that meet are one nature, they cannot be a unified nature (batalat sa "ir al- murakkabat). According to him, it is clear that Jesus Christ shares our nature in things like eating, drinking, and dying, and that he is different from our nature in his miracles. These evidences show that after unity, Christ has two natures and two essences. Therefore, unity is neither in substance (kyana) nor in essence (uknum). Unity is in the divine sonship. This does not entail the corruption of Christ's natures or the transformation of his divine nature into his human nature or his human nature into his divine nature.[406]

In general, the Nestorian Church emphasizes that the uknum (knoma-hypostasis) cannot be separate from nature (kyana-jewel-zāt). According to this, if natures exist and preserve their properties, uknums will exist in the same way. The distinction between human and divine nature allows the actions of the Messiah to be attributed to one of the two natures according to the situation. The distinctive feature of 'Abdullah b. Tayyib is that during the angel's greeting to Mary, he states that it was the human Jesus, not the divine spirit, who was with Mary. According to this, the angel

[405] John, 20/17.

[406] Kuhn, *Defending*, 167-168. The study entitled "Ta "didu Arāʾi "n-Nāṣ fi"-Ittihād wa Hujjjatuhum" is preserved in Abū Isḥāq Muʿtaman al-Dawla Ibn al-ʿAṣṣṣāl's "Majmū' Usūl al-Dīn wa-Masmū' Maḥṣūl al-Yaqīn". See Al- Mu'taman Ibn al-"Assāl, *Majmū" Usūl al-Dīn wa-Masmū" Maḥṣūl al- Yaqīn*, ed. A. Wadi, trans. B. Pirone, Vol. 6a (bab 1-18), (Jerusalem: Cairo, The Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, 1998),

bab, 8/192-193.

[404] Kuhn, *Defending*, 166-167.

The human nature that is born is a human nature that is not united with the divine nature. Normally, the overwhelming majority of Nestorian theologians believe that from the moment Mary conceived Jesus Christ, the divine logos realized the union with the human Jesus. Ibn Tayyib, however, thinks differently. He clearly states that the nature at the time of Christ's birth was human nature, which was not united with divine nature.[407]

Abdullah b. Tayyib, in his *Maqālaat al-'Adaduha Erbaate 'Asharata Baben, uses* the same terms for Christology as he uses for trinity. According to him, the substance of each essence signifies the manifestation of the character of a thing (absolute et-tiba'), such as the character of humanity manifested in their persons or the character of fire manifested in their manifestations (al-'adaduha). According to him, if the essence is made particularized by an attribute, it is called an uknum (hypostasis) according to its attribute. If the attribute is concretized (ta "ayyinat), it is called a person (parchopa). Unity (ittihad) occurs when two or more things are joined together. The result is either a corruption that produces a third entity (such as the union of fire and water) or the preservation of their respective states, with one participating in the quality (attribute) of the other. Ibn Tayyib gives the example of Socrates and the color white. Although the nature of the two is not the same, Socrates can be defined as white and white as Socrates, since each attribute is transferred to the other. But if the unity is a mixture (mezjj), the essence of both disappears and the definition is attributed to the composition, not to the parties that have lost their natures. Therefore, according to him, when the essence of the Creator is united with the human being born of Mary, there is neither corruption (of nature) nor transformation (istihala). Their natures remained unchanged and the attributes of each were transferred to the other. This is why it is said of Christ's humanity that "He is God" and, in accordance with the scriptures, God is identified as man. The purpose of unity, however, is not the demeaning of the divine nature, but the human

He states that the prohibition (of describing God as human) is clear since it is a glorification of His nature. According to him, for this reason, human attributes are not attributed to God, but divine attributes are attributed to man. This is why humanity (nasut) is said to be a divine attribute. By transferring the divine attribute to him, he (humanity) has performed miracles. Because it is God revealed in him who performs miracles.[408]

From the above, it is clear that Ibn Tayyib's interlocutor was not Muslims but other Christian groups. According to him, in the divine sonship attribute (hassa), the unity of divine and human natures permits the attribution of divine attributes to the human Jesus. A one-way "communicatio idiomatum" (union of attributes) appears here. However, when Ibn Tayyib attributes the attribute of power, which performs miracles through this common unity, to the human substance, he does not mean the attribute of essence, but the attribute of action. The divine sonship attribute of the essence is not transferred to the humanity of Christ, but rather the attribute of action (hassa). In this case, Christ's deity in the sonum continues to remain separate from his humanity. Although giving human attributes to God is in accordance with the scriptures, it is seen as dangerous because it could be tantamount to denying the divine. It is therefore very important for Nestorians to avoid attributing suffering to the divine nature. The incarnation led to the elevation of humanity, not through the reduction of the divine being, but through the transmission of the divine attribute as depicted in the miracles of Christ. In this sense, the incarnation is seen as the elevation of humanity to participate in the divine.[409] According to his answer to the question of why unity is realized in the person of the Son and not with the Father and the Spirit, unity is not realized with the other persons of the Trinity,

[408] Kuhn, *Defending*, 171-172. The article "Maqālaat al-'Adaduha Erbaate 'Asharata Baben" is preserved in
[404] Kuhn, *Defending*, 166-167.

Al-Mu'taman Ibn al-'Aṣṣṣāl's "Majmū' Usūl al-Dīn wa-Masmū' Maḥṣūl al-Yaqīn". See Al Mu'taman Ibn al-'Assāl, *Majmū' Usūl al-Dīn wa-Masmū' Maḥṣūl al-Yaqīn*, bab, 11/275-277.

[409] Kuhn*, Defending*, 174.

It is realized through the son. This is because the eternal can only establish a relationship (vasla) with the created through this uknum.[410]

A general assessment of what is quoted from Abdullah b. Tayyib reveals that the Christology of the Nestorian Church emphasizes the revelation of God rather than atonement. The reality of sin is associated with humanity, but only as a secondary cause for the incarnation. In the context of the incarnation, the unity between the eternal nature and the created nature expresses only a unity of qualities (unity of essence), that is, the essence of divine sonship. For this reason, both essences continue to exist as they are without change in the two universals. As long as everything characterized by a necessary quality remains in a fixed state in form, the quality likewise necessarily continues to exist. Since the two natures and the two essences are characterized as two natures and two essences before the union, the two natures and the two essences must preserve and continue their existence after the union.[411]

Mar Elia, the bishop of Nusaybin, expressed his views on Christology in his commentary on the statement of faith and in other works.[412] Although he adhered to the two-knoma doctrine of the Nestorian Church, he did not use the terms used in this formula verbatim. According to him, the term hypostasis (uknum) h a s a special metaphysical meaning. It is defined by the concept of quality, through which the divine attributes and the doctrine of the Trinity are explained. Instead of the term knoma (hypostasis), he used "jawharan" in the trinitarian form in accordance with the Arabic tradition, or the terms lahut (divine) and nasut (human) in accordance with the Syriac tradition, to indicate the diophysite nature of Christ. Without using the term hypostasis (knoma), he distinguishes between the two natures in Christ, the individual and the concrete.

but for the divinity of Christ as an element of the Trinity, distinct from the Father and the Spirit.

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[410] Kuhn, *Defending*, 178; Ibn al-"Assāl, *Majmū" Usūl al-Dīn wa-Masmū" Maḥṣūl al-Yaqīn*, bab, 27/ 77- 78.
[411] Kuhn, *Defending*, 162, 165.

[412] For the works of Mar Elia, see Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 11-14.

the word (logos). To indicate Christ's humanity, he uses the term "creature" in the sense of created from the substance of Mary as an individual human nature and substance, or "haykal" (temple) in the Antiochian tradition. Sometimes he also uses the word "body" to indicate his humanity. He treats Christ's humanity as an individual human nature and an individual person, not as a general abstract substance of humanity. Thus, there is divinity in Christ as the divine word (logos) and likewise there is humanity in Christ as a concrete being or individual human nature. He emphasizes that Mary gave birth to humanity, not the word eternally born of the Father. He also uses the terms "hadîs" and "kadîm" to denote human and divine substance.[413] Elia does not use the word parchopa (person) for the unity of the person of the incarnation in Christology. According to him, the Arabic term person does not have the same meaning as the Syriac parchopa. The person refers to a specific individual, not to a spiritual being, but only to the material elements of creation. In this context it is used only to refer to the concrete human nature of Christ.[414] He uses the names "Christ" and "Son" instead of the term person to designate the one person of the Incarnation. For these names signify his divinity and humanity, the unity of the two realities.[415]

In his exegesis of the statement of faith, Elia writes: "And we believe in one Lord Jesus Christ: Son of God, the Only Begotten Son, the firstborn of all creation", Elia explains the terms "Only Begotten Son" and "firstborn", the former referring to the divine nature of Christ and the latter to his human nature. According to him, the fathers of the Council of Nicaea combined these two titles and thereby pointed to the duality in Christ. "Only begotten Son", the word (logos) of God

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[413] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 59-61.
[414] According to him, the term person should also not be used to denote the three elements of the Trinity because of the danger of being understood as "tritheism". "We do not say that there are three persons but three attributes for the three uknum in the Trinity." See Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 62-63.
[415] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 60-63, 114, 116.

The names "wisdom" and "speech" can also be used to express it. For him, the union of the Word (logos) with humanity should not be understood as its separation or division from the Father. In order to explain these ideas, Elia uses the analogies of water, fire, sun, and human beings, which are often used in the trinity by the Nestorian tradition, in the context of Christology. Accordingly, the divine word (logos) is not separated from the divine substance by its union with human nature, just as words born of our human substance are not separated from our substance when pronounced or written on paper, or the rays of the sun are not separated from the sun even though they extend from the sky to the earth. Since God can never be devoid of intelligence, wisdom, and speech, the eternal word (logos) resides in and is inseparable from God's essence and substance. Just as the human word is born from the human substance and the rays are born from the sun, the word (logos) is born from God and is therefore called the Son of God. In this respect, the word, which is a divine property (hassa), is fixed and does not undergo any change. According to him, "the firstborn of all creation" signifies the humanity of Christ. The expression points to three characteristics of his humanity: Christ is the firstborn of those born of water and spirit. He was baptized in the Jordan River and the Holy Spirit descended upon him.[416] He is the firstborn of those who rose from the dead and will live forever. After his resurrection he will never die. He is the firstborn of those who enter the kingdom of heaven.[417] "It is impossible for our Lord to die again. Death has no power over Him anymore.[418] Because of these three qualities, in terms of his body, he is the "firstborn of all creation." that Jesus Christ was a divine person. According to him, by uniting the divinity (lahut) and humanity (nasut) of Jesus Christ in one word, the holy fathers gave an answer to the Jacobites and the enemies of the truth who followed them, who denied one of their natures. Canceling the humanity and messiahship of Jesus Christ

[416] Matthew, 3/16-17, Mark 1/9, Luke, 3/21-22

[417] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 86, 88, 90, 92, 96, 98.
[418] Romans, 6/9.

They are attacking God, the saint and the Almighty, by including hunger, thirst, dying, being buried, and the bodily sufferings of our Lord in His divinity (lahut). God is great and clear from what these oppressors say.[419]

According to Elia, the Jacobite doctrine teaches a nature, which amounts to the denial of human nature in Christ. This doctrine leads to a serious doctrinal problem, theopaschism, in which all human characteristics, such as suffering, are attributed to the divine nature. In his exegesis of the phrase "We believe in him who was begotten of his Father before all worlds (in eternity) and was not created", Elia explains that this phrase is attributed to the word (logos) and that by "uncreated" and "unformed" he means that he is the creator, not created from the essence of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that is, from the temple (haykal). "The true God from the true God is the Son of the substance and nature (kyana) of his Father. By his hand (through him) the worlds were made perfect, made firm, and all things were created", he states that the church fathers meant that the word (logos) is from the Father and that God created all things through the word (logos). According to him, the word of God (logos) is an attribute of the substance of God, which is its uknumu (qiwam-hypostasis). It is just like the human word (speech), which is the essential substance of man and never separated from him. Regarding the creation of all creatures with the word God, Elia uses the Islamic term (kun feyekun) "he said be and it was" to express that God did not create this world through any action, effort, labor, or touching of matter, but created it with the word.[420] Here he makes a connection between the expression "kun feyekun" in the Qur "an and the word (logos) of God.

Elia explains that after these explanations, the church fathers ceased to speak of the word (logos) and began to speak of the messiahship (created in time) or the divine design, that is, the providence (incarnation) of our Lord.

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[419] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 100, 102.
[420] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 104, 106, 108.

He says. In his exegesis of the phrase "descended from heaven for us human beings and for our salvation, incarnated by the power of the Holy Spirit, and became man", he states that by "descended from heaven" they mean the word revealed by God. It can be said that he is trying to establish similarities between the expression of the word (logos) being revealed and the understanding of the revelation being revealed in Islam. According to him, although the word of God appears to be feminine because it is written with the Arabic "ta "i marbuta" since it is of divine substance, the "word/logos" should be considered masculine. This is only a grammatical femininity. He states that the phrase "manifested (by the power of the Holy Spirit) and became man" was used by the Jacobites as an argument for their heresy.[421] According to him, according to the Catholic (Casalikiyya) Church, known as the Nestorian Church, just as the names "Christ" and "Son" include both the united eternal word (logos) and the human person taken from Mary, so the names "man" and "son of man" include both the united soul and body. When someone is said to carry a thousand ratl (a unit of weight), it is understood to mean that it is carried by his body, not by his soul. This is because the soul does not carry anything because of its lightness, lightness and spirituality. Only a human being composed of body and soul can perform this action.[422]

After expressing the attribution of Christ's divine actions to his humanity or the divine nature of his human actions, Elia uses the image of a veil to represent the word of God (logos) as manifested in human flesh.[423] According to him, just as a king speaks to his subjects from behind a curtain in order to address them, so the word (logos) is manifested in the body of Christ.

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[421] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 110, 112.

[422] Concerning (actions) related to the body and attributed to the soul, he points to Isaiah's words to King Ezekiel when he healed him of his illness. "Because you love me, O Lord, you have kept my soul (spirit) from corruption, (Isaiah, 38:17) that is, you have removed harm from me. You know that the soul (spirit) does not decay and is not corrupted. On the contrary, the body decays and perishes in the grave. The soul returns to this body, as the Prophet Isaiah said. Ebeid*, Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 114, 116.

[423] Hebrews, 10/20: "A curtain stands before the most holy place in the earthly sanctuary. This curtain

represents the body of Jesus. Jesus gave us access to the place beyond the veil through His body sacrificed on the cross".

through whom He spoke to us. From this point of view, the meaning of the Church Fathers' statement "He became incarnate and became man by the power of the Holy Spirit" should be carefully considered and not misunderstood as the dissenters do. According to him, in the sentence "He was created and born of the Virgin Mary", it is clearly understood that the Virgin Mary did not conceive and give birth to the Word (logos). Here, the humanity (nasut) of Jesus Christ is pointed out by what is born as a hadith. With regard to this, "We (Nestorians) and Melkites (followers of the Council of Chalcedon) agree that our Lord has two essences, one divine (lahuti) and the other human (nasuti). Therefore, what is permissible to attribute to his divinity must be attributed to his divinity and what is permissible to attribute to his humanity must be attributed to his humanity." After this explanation, Elia presents the statements in the New Testament that are specific to the divinity of Jesus Christ and those that are specific to his humanity.[424] According to him, the statement "I and the Father are one"[425] in the New Testament about the divinity of Jesus Christ shows that the Word (logos) and the Father are one in substance. According to him, it is not permissible to apply this statement to the humanity of Jesus Christ and say that the body of Christ and the Father are one substance. Likewise, the New Testament statement about the humanity of Jesus Christ, "I will be crucified and killed, and after three days I will rise again"[426] , cannot be applied to the divinity of Christ, who is the eternal substance of life without beginning or end, which cannot be penetrated by the senses and cannot be touched by the hands, and it is not permissible to say that he was crucified and killed. Death is the departure of the soul from the body. According to him, God cannot be conceived as a body from which the soul is separated. If Jesus Christ is considered to be only the body and the one who was made, then he would have to have a creator and an author. According to him, the church fathers first of all taught that the Word (logos) was eternally begotten of the Father, and that the saying "Mary conceived him and gave

birth to him" was a hadith.

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[424] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 116, 118.
[425] John, 10/30.
[426] Matthew, 16/21, Mark, 8/31, Luke, 9/22, 24/7.

They state that his humanity, created in time, was born from Mary. He points to the Prophet David's statement, "I have adopted you from eternity, O lad" as evidence that the lad (Jesus Christ) does not appear to be eternally adopted (born). According to him, these statements are a prophecy pointing to the Lord Messiah, whom Mary gave birth to later (hadisan) and who was united with the Word eternally born of God.[427]

According to Elia, the statements "He suffered and was crucified under Pontius Pilate" and "He was buried and rose again on the third day as it is written (in the scriptures)" can only be attributed to his body (nasuta) and not to his divinity (lahut). He states that the body (nasut) was resurrected through the power of the divinity residing in it. With the phrase "He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of his Father" he means that the body ascended to heaven hadithically (materially). The word (logos) residing in the body never left the body of the Lord in heaven, who ultimately ascended to heaven. According to him, the saying "He sat down at the right hand of the Father" is likewise attributed to the body. For the acts of sitting and rising apply to the body, not to the soul.[428] Elia states that the phrase "seated at the right hand of God" refers to Jesus Christ's becoming a caliph in God's kingdom and taking charge of its work and administration. For God has made his Son his caliph, as the Bible says.[429]

By using the Islamic term khalifa, Elia establishes a relationship between the creation of man as God's caliph or vicegerent on earth and the ascended Messiah who will judge mankind on the day of judgment. Accordingly

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[427] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 120, 122.
[428] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 124, 126.
[429] In this passage where Jesus Christ is referred to as God's caliph, Elia uses the following references: "He said to Christ: "This is my son and my messenger. Listen to him and obey him (Mark, 9/7)". After the resurrection Christ said of Himself: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me". Daniel testifies to this when he said: "In a dream (vision) I was shown the Lord sitting on his throne and the angels in heaven standing before him. God was shown as a man, the humanity of Christ. He gave him power, dominion and glory and commanded all peoples, nations and people of every language to worship him" (Daniel, 7/9-14)". This is what the Fathers meant when they said, "He sat down at the right hand of his Father". As the prophet David said: "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand". Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 128, 130

caliph and God's vicegerent on God's "day of judgment" Christ and granting Him the honor of sitting at His right hand. Elia says the following on the subject: "O reader of this book, know that the ascending, descending, and sitting are only related to Christ's humanity (nasut), which is united with his divinity (lahut). It is only through the union of humanity (nasut) with divinity (lahut) that He has attained all these honors. It is not permissible to attribute anything to either of its two essences except what is permitted to be attributed to it."[430] Finally, commenting on the sentence "(We confess) the resurrection of our (dead) bodies and eternal life", he says: "We confess the resurrection of our bodies to the state of grace and eternal life in the angelic realm of the heavens, as our Lord promised us and showed us an example of this with His own soul". According to him, this is the point on which the fathers of the Council of Nicaea agreed.[431] These statements reveal the importance of the human nature of Jesus Christ in salvation for the Nestorian Church. Here, the elevation of Christ's humanity to the divine plane and his union with the divine nature (logos), and his gaining the honor of carrying out the final judgment as God's vicar and caliph, is presented as the ultimate goal of the divine design. Moreover, since it is not possible for God to appear, it would be more in accordance with justice for Christ, in whose human nature the divine nature resides, to carry out the "judgment on the Day of Judgment".

When Elia's christological views are considered in general, according to him, the two substances (natures) present in Christ were voluntarily united in one person whom he called "Christ" and "Son". His use of images of the human nature of Jesus Christ as a temple or veil in which divinity dwells in his depiction of the Incarnation is very much in line with church tradition. Elia's most important characteristic is his liberal use of Islamic terms in Christology. For example, he indirectly refers to the revelation of God in the Qur'an.

[430] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 128, 130.
[431] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 140, 142.

The Syriac tradition seems to have made a connection between the appearance of divine speech in the humanity of the Messiah, who is depicted with the image of a garment, and his speaking to creatures.[432] The Syriac tradition seems to have established a connection between the appearance of the divine word in the humanity of the Messiah, who is depicted in the image of a garment, and his speech to the creatures. In the same way, it is possible to make such a connection between God's creation with the words "kun feyekun" and the creation of the universe through the word (logos) of God. Another important expression used is the term caliph, which appears in the Quran[433] . According to Elia, the caliph is the New Adam who emerges from the union of the humanity of Christ with the Logos of God.[434]

"Abdisho", one of the important theologians who provided information about the Nestorian Church's understanding of Christology in the Islamic period, states in his work entitled *Jawhar that* there are three reasons for the wisdom of God's creation of Adam the First, the father of humanity, in His own image after the creation of the universe. According to the last of these, the divinity created Adam I in his own image because he intended to make man a dwelling place (statue/temple) in order to unite with him.[435] Elsewhere, he states that God chose Abraham's descendants in order to make an eternal temple of them and established circumcision as a sign of the covenant between them.[436] It is clear from these statements that with the creation of humanity, God carefully prepared the human nature in which the God Logos would be united in accordance with His divine design for the incarnation. After narrating the story of Adam's crime and the subsequent fall, "Abdişo" relates that all the prophets who were sent proclaimed and prophesied about the Messiah who would bring salvation to the world and renew all creation.[437]

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[432] Shura, 51: "Allah speaks to a man only by revelation or behind a veil. Or He sends a messenger and reveals to him whatever He wills by His permission. Verily, He is the Exalted, the Owner of judgment and wisdom".

[433] Al-Baqarah, 30: "Remember that your Lord said to the angels: I will create a caliph in the earth. They said: "Will you create in the earth one who will make mischief in it and shed blood in it, while we glorify You with Your praise and glorify You? Allah said to them: "Surely I know what you cannot know."
[434] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 74-75.
[435] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 9.
[436] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 10.
[437] He gives the following sentences from the Old Testament as examples of prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah: Genesis, 49/10-12, Deuteronomy, 18/15,19, Exodus, 16/4. See Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 11.

"Abdisho" expresses the views of the Nestorian Church on the incarnation and Christology under the title "On the measure completed in Christ (mdabbranutha/incarnation)". Accordingly, despite all their struggles, the prophets were not able to reform the lives of the people and bring them to the knowledge of the truth that would make them renounce idol worship and subject them to the divine commandments for their salvation. Therefore, there is no other way for the renewal of our nature and the restoration of our life than the appearance of God in this world. He expresses this situation with the analogy of a ruler who sends various messengers for the administration of his country and the settlement of disputes with himself, and when he sees that the messengers are not successful due to their weakness, he is forced to take on the work of the salvation of the citizens of his country himself. According to him, God cannot be seen in His own nature. If it were possible for God to appear to creatures in His nature, then all creation would perish because of His dazzling light. Therefore, He has made man a dwelling place and a temple. In this way, He united the mortal human being with His divinity in the form of an eternal unity from which no separation is possible. He made him a partner in sovereignty, authority and dominion. "Abdişo" describes this situation with the analogy of the sun and the pearl. The divine nature, through unification, has made humanity (human nature) shine like sunlight shining on a pure and flawless pearl. In such a way that the nature of the one who is made to shine (illuminated) has become like the nature of the one who shines (illuminates). Thus, enlightenment is realized with the light and illumination that affects the nature as if it emanated from the nature that emits light, and the process of seeing (the truth) is complete. According to him, no change has occurred in the agent as a result of the transfer of the verb to the object. It is like the word hidden in the soul merging with the forms of writing with the consent of the intellect and moving from one place to another without moving from its place. In the same way, the word (logos) of the Father united

with a human being from us through the intellect and came into the world without being separated from the essence of the Father. "Abdisho", "Word

In the sentence "became human and lived among us"[438] , he attributes "became" to the body and "lived" to the word/logos.[439]

"Abdisho" elaborates further under the heading "The precaution of the Messiah (mdabbranutha)". According to this, the logos of God is the angel saying, "Peace Mary! You have attained the favor of God. The Lord is with you."[440] Simultaneously with the angel's address, God merged with the fetus, which was formed in the womb of the holy virgin without human seed. He gave him an exalted name, performed miracles with his birth, and brought joy to the whole world.[441] When he reached the age of thirty, he was baptized by John, even though he did not need to be baptized, just to be an example and a model for us in all things. Then, by revealing the hidden mysteries, He atoned for the original sin inherited from Adam, removing the judgment of sinfulness against our sex. In His resurrection He revealed the mystery of the general resurrection. He suffered as it is written in the scriptures and was crucified under Pontius Pilate, died, was buried and rose again on the third day. After his resurrection he appeared to his followers for forty days.[442]

After the above statements, "Abdisho" cites the controversies and divisions that arose in the Christian world regarding the incarnation and Christology of Jesus Christ and the cryptological formulas of the Jacobites, Melkites and Nestorians[443] and offers various explanations to reject the view of the first two churches. According to the first of these explanations, if it is admitted that there is a nature (kyana) and a knoma (hypostasis) in Christ after the union, then the human nature and knoma disappear. In that case there is not salvation, but destruction. If the divine nature and knoma are destroyed, then unspeakable cruelty arises. If we mix and mingle nature and knoma, then that too i s a corruption. Neither divinity nor humanity will remain self-subsistent, but will be destroyed.

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[438] John, 1/14.
[439] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 12.

[440] Luke, 1/28.
[441] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 12.
[442] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 13.
[443] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 14-15.

they become one. "Abdisho" cites a proof from John Bar Penkaya about the views of other churches about unity by mixing and the Eastern Church about unity by joining. He presents two names of the "Messiah" written in black and red ink. In the first of these, the two colors are mixed together, so that a different color appears that is neither black nor red. In the other name "Messiah", the two colors are not mixed, the outline of the writing is drawn with red ink while the inner part is scribbled with black ink, preserving both colors. In this way, the error of the crystallological view of the Jacobites and the correctness of their own crystallological view were intended to be explained.[444] According to the second explanation of "Abdisho", the divine nature and knoma is an eternal spirit that is immaterial before and after unity. But human nature and knoma is a temporal and inky body. If unity destroys the distinctive qualities of the natures and knomas in Christ, then there is either nothingness or something that is neither God nor man. But if unity does not nullify the distinctive qualities of the natures and knomata in Christ, then Christ becomes the unifier of the two natures and the two knomata in the person of the Son. Thirdly, "Abdisho" continues, citing evidence from the New Testament, "Meanwhile, the child Jesus was growing and maturing, filled with wisdom. The grace of God was upon him",[445] "God sent the man Jesus. He proved it to you by the miracles, wonders and signs that He did among you through Him",[446] "There is only one mediator between God and men, and that is the man Jesus Christ"[447] He argues that the belief that there are two natures and two natures in Christ after the union is clearly confirmed. According to him, whoever is hostile to these proofs is empty of all truth.[448]

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[444] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 16.
[445] Luke, 2/40.
[446] John, 2/22.
[447] 1 Timothy, 2/5.
[448] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 17.

After these explanations, "Abdisho" responds to some of the accusations made against them. He rejects the accusation that the Nestorian Christological formula would lead to the appearance of four knomans in the Trinity for three reasons. First, he argues that if the Nestorian Church's confession that there are two natures in Christ leads to four natures in the Trinity, then their (the other churches') confession that there are two natures in Christ leads to the conclusion that there are equally two natures in divinity. Second, the Trinity, as recognized by all parties, is eternal and impermanent. But the human knoma is temporal and composite. Therefore, a fourth knoma is not possible. Finally, if the Nestorian Church confessed that there are two sons in Christ, they could rightly be accused of this charge. For the Father and the Holy Spirit, together with the two sons, would make four persons. But since it is quite clear that the Nestorian Church confesses one Son, one Christ and one person, they are not afraid of the charge of blasphemy.[449]

From the topics discussed so far, it has been tried to reveal what the views of the Monophysites, the Chalcedonian Greco-Roman churches and the Eastern Church were regarding the debates around the person of Jesus Christ in the Christian world and why the disputes arose. It is understood that the dispute between the Eastern Church and the Monophysites is very deep and based on reasonable reasons according to both sides. However, it is necessary to clarify what the dispute between the Eastern Church and the Greco-Roman churches, both of which are diophysites, is based on, or more precisely, what is the difference between the Greco-Roman diophysite understanding and the Eastern Church diophysite understanding. When the issue is considered in the context of Christological debates, it is understood that the difference mainly stems from the meanings attributed to the term hypostasis. For the Greco-Roman churches, this term meant a person. In this respect, Nestorius' view of Jesus Christ's divine and

[449] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 18.

The fact that the Eastern Church delegation mentioned the view of two hypostases in the meeting held in the presence of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian in 562/563, and finally the official acceptance of the two hypostases discourse with the 612 bishops' meeting was seen by the Greco-Roman churches as the Eastern Church's defense of a two-person Christology. However, when it is taken into consideration that the Eastern Church officially formulated its crystallology as two natures in one person of Jesus Christ until 612 and never used the term hypostasis (knoma) in the crystallological formula, it becomes clear that they actually had a view quite close to the Greco-Roman diophysite understanding. It is also quite clear that both Nestorius and the Church of the East took the two terms hypostasis in a different context and that this did not prejudice the one person of Jesus Christ. This indicates that the dispute between the two sides was not primarily theological in nature, but was based on political disagreements.

During the period when Christological debates intensified in the Christian world, some rulers who sat on the throne of the Roman Empire adopted the monophysite view, while others made the diophysite view official. However, considering the position of the Monophysites in the east of the country for border security, the rulers made efforts to reconcile both views. Aiming to realize religious and political unity in the country, the rulers, without exception, chose Nestorius and the Eastern Church in relation to him as a sacrifice in order to bring the Greco-Roman diophysite understanding and the monophysite understanding to a common ground. To achieve this goal, the Antiochian diophysite understanding, which had no political cost and lacked social support within the borders of the country, was deliberately chosen. Thus, by condemning Nestorius and the prominent figures of the Antiochian diophysite understanding, an affinity with the Monophysites was tried to be established. These efforts were not limited to this alone.

It was extended to the acceptance of the theopaschite view, which was unacceptable to the Church. Given the condemnation of Nestorius and other prominent figures of the Antiochian diophysite tradition for advocating a two-person Christology at ecumenical councils that were considered infallible, a rift between the Greco-Roman churches and the Eastern Church, called Nestorian, was created that was difficult to repair. It is quite clear that this schism was politically motivated rather than theologically motivated. In fact, any fair-minded Greco-Roman scholar who objectively examines the diophysite understanding of the Eastern Church must admit that there is no significant difference between the diophysite understanding of the two sides. However, when he considers the church dogmas concerning the ecumenical councils, it becomes very difficult for him to make such a judgment. Finally, it should be noted that the rivalry between the Greco-Roman and the Eastern Church also points to a useful argument for the Eastern Church in terms of its political dimension. In the political rivalry of both the Sassanids and the Muslims with the Roman/Byzantine Empire, being in conflict with the dominant understanding of Christianity in the Roman Empire had many advantages for the Eastern Church.

5. HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is pronounced "Ruha d-Qudsha" in Syriac. "Ruha" means breath of life, wind, vapor, spirit, spiritual being, ghost, etc.[450] In the Old Testament, the term Holy Spirit[451] is used surprisingly frequently in some Jewish texts, such as the Palestinian tradition of Aramaic translations of the Old Testament or the Targum texts, although it is rarely used in contrast to the common expression God or the Spirit of the Lord (Ruah El/Elohim/Yahowah)[452] . Official Babylonian Targum

[450] Jesse Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1979), 533-534.
[451] Psalms, 51/12; Isaiah, 63/10-11.
[452] In the Old Testament, verbs such as "to be upon," "to be upon," "to wear," "to receive," "to guide," and "to hover" are used to indicate the "Spirit" of God. See Sebastian P. Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, ed. Jacob Vellian, The Syrian Churches Series 9 (Kottoyam: 1979), 5-6.

While the Targum Onkelos normally uses the term "spirit of revelation/prophecy", a term also used by some early Syriac writers, the earliest Palestinian Targum texts prefer the term "Holy Spirit".[453] Together with God's wisdom (chokmah) and word (dabar), it refers to the active and immanent dimension of God in His dealings with the world and creation. Accordingly, the spirit of God is the power and might of God that affects life, acts in creation, empowers those whom He has appointed, such as judges, kings, and especially prophets, and seeks to renew the world with justice. In the Old Testament, the spirit is often conceived of as impersonal, although it is sometimes referred to in personal terms such as guide and teacher.[454] In the Jewish tradition, however, it was not seen as a separate and independent entity from God, but only as a literary mode of expression, sometimes with a tendency towards personification. While the early church fathers did not take into account the distinction between the Old Testament "Spirit" being personal or impersonal, Theodore of Mopsuestia is an exception. According to him, the term "Spirit" in the Old Testament does not refer to any distinct person or hypostasis.[455] In the New Testament, the divinity or distinct personhood of the Holy Spirit is not as clear as the divinity and personhood of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit prepared Mary for the birth of Jesus, appeared to Jesus when he was baptized in the Jordan River, supported him in his activities, appeared to the apostles on the day of Pentecost after his resurrection and ascension, and distributed his divine gifts.[456] The paraclete (helper, comforter), whom Jesus Christ described as the spirit of truth in the Gospel of John and who would come after him, is recognized by Christians as the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, Jesus Christ will ask the Father for him, and after his departure, the paraclete will live in the Christian community, giving them

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[453] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 2-3.
[454] See also I Samuel, 13/16; Job, 27/3; Nehemiah, 9/12; Exodus, 31/3; Judges, 3/10; II Samuel, 23/2; Isaiah, 42/1; Ezekiel, 2/2; Psalms, 143/10.
[455] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 5.
[456] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 288-290.

He will teach, guide and strengthen.[457] In this way, the paraclete can be considered to have been instrumental in the actualization of the Holy Spirit as an element of the Trinity after the Father and the Son.[458] As a matter of fact, at the First Council of Constantinople

(381) The Holy Spirit was recognized to be of the same substance as the Father and the Son and was given the third element of the Trinity.

The Syriac word "Ruha" is linguistically feminine. In early Syriac literature, the Holy Spirit was envisioned as a mother.[459] This is not only because the word is linguistically feminine. Rather, it was deliberately conceived as s u c h because such a conception was in keeping with their well-established theology. Since God is conceived as the Father and Jesus Christ as the Son, the Holy Spirit is inevitably conceived as the mother. In a passage referring to celibacy and chaste living, Apostasy, in describing the Old Testament[460] "one who will leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife", says: "When a man is single, he loves and honors God his Father and the Holy Spirit his mother, and has no other love. But when a man marries a woman, he leaves his father and mother." In the *Acts of Thomas*, the prayer to the Holy Spirit is "Come, O merciful mother!". She is also regularly depicted as female in early copies of the New Testament. This is a common understanding in early Christianity,[461] and early Judeo-Christian communities, like the Syriac tradition, saw the Holy Spirit as the mother of Christ and of themselves.[462] This understanding is maintained in many passages of the Hudra. Ephrem and Afrahat refer to the Spirit as the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Jesus. From their writings it is clear that the Holy S p i r i t

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[457] John, 14/15-17; 15/26; 16/8-16. According to Muslims, the Paraclete is the Prophet Muhammad. The Holy Spirit is also recognized as Gabriel.
[458] Plantinga et al, *An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 292-293.
[459] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 3.
[460] Genesis, 2/24.
[461] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 3-4; Sako, *Abauna "s-Syrian*, 32-33, 66.
[462] Robert Murray, "A Hymn of St. Ephrem to Christ on the Incarnation, the Holy Spirit, and the Sacraments", *Eastern Churches Review (ECR)* 3/2 (Oxford: 1970), 149.

It is quite clear that it was not used in the context of the Trinity. With the influence of Greek theology on the Syriac world, from the end of the VI century onwards, the use of the Holy Spirit as feminine was abandoned in favor of the masculine. Due to the abuse of this image by groups considered heretical, Syriac writers became wary of addressing the Holy Spirit as mother. As a result of this reaction, the word "ruha" began to change from feminine to masculine (qaddishta-qudsha) when referring to the Holy Spirit.[463] Nevertheless, approaches that likened the Trinity to a family and identified the Holy Spirit with Eve continued to exist. For example, in one of his analogies of the Trinity, Babai likens the Father to Adam, the Son to Abel, and the Holy Spirit to Eve. According to him, Adam was not born and never became a son. Abel was born and never became a Father. Eve was not born, but came out of Adam (from his rib). She was never someone's daughter or sister.[464] In the tradition of the Eastern Church, it is generally accepted that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father without being treated as a systematic dogma, although some writers have stated that He proceeds from both the Father and the Son.[465]

In Syriac literature, the terms "rahlef" and "agen" stand out as two important technical terms used to express the actions and activities of the Holy Spirit. The term "rahlef", which means "to stand on", "to hover", is used in the Old Testament to refer to the Spirit of God hovering over the waters.[466] This term is rarely used in the Hebrew Old Testament, but is common in the Peshitta translation. The word "agen", which means "to envelop", "to bring under the shadow", has been used in the Syriac-speaking Church from an early period to refer to the Holy Spirit.

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[463] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 4; "Come, Compassionate Mother..., Come, Holy Spirit: a forgotten aspect of early Eastern Christian Imagery", *ARAM: Society for Stro-Mesopotamian Studies*, 3/2 (Oxford: 1991), 252.
[464] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 116-117.
[465] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 107, 163; Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 116-117.
[466] Genesis, 1/2.

It is not used in the context of the Holy Spirit in the Peshitta and Targum translations of the Old Testament, although it is an important technical word used to indicate the actions of the Spirit.[467] In this case, the term must have been used as a synonym for the word "epiphoitao", which is not used in the Bible but is frequently used in Greek liturgical and patristic texts to refer to the actions and activities of the Holy Spirit. This term probably originated in a region where Greek and Syriac were used together. For the term "epiphoitao" is found in the Greek epic of the St. James anaphora, and in the Syriac epic of the Eucharist, which is modeled on this anaphora, this Greek term seems to have been translated by the words "agen" or "rahlef". The terms "rahlef" and "agen" are not biblical in origin. In the early Syriac tradition, the understanding that the Holy Spirit baptized them by mixing or participating in the baptismal water, bread and wine reveals this situation. An example of this is Ephrem's statement that "Christ was baptized in order to mix the invisible Spirit with the visible water". In addition to these two terms, the biblical verbs "to come, to descend" and "to dwell" reveal the characteristic feature of the Syriac tradition.[468] In early Syriac literature, the Holy Spirit was symbolized by fire, doves and holy oil.[469]

Regarding the divine plan and salvation in the New Testament, in events such as the incarnation of the God Logos, the preparation of Mary for the incarnation, the baptism of Jesus Christ, etc., the Holy Spirit comes to the fore as the power that directs all these activities. Jesus

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[467] This term is used in the New Testament to translate the Greek words episkiazo (Luke, 1/35; Acts, 5/15), epipipto (Acts, 10/44; 11/15) and skenoo (John, 1/14; Acts, 2/26; 2 Corinthians, 12/9). It means "to descend upon, to envelop, to shadow, to hang over, to protect". In the New Testament the following actions are attributed to the Holy Spirit: "to take away", (Acts, 8/39, Luke, 12/12), "to teach", (John, 14/26), "to comfort", (Acts, 9/31), "to reveal and teach", (1 Corinthians 2/10), "to give life", (2 Corinthians, 3/6), "to give life", (2 Corinthians, 3/6). Corinthians, 3/6), "to inform, to make known", (John, 16/13; Hebrews, 9/8), "to testify, to warn", (Acts, 20/23; Hebrews 10/15), "to guide", (John, 16/13). See Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 5-6.

[468] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 6-8.

[469] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 11.

After the ascension of Christ, the Holy Spirit descended and continues to work among believers, giving divine grants and this process will continue until the return of Christ. With its emphasis on the Holy Spirit, the Eastern Church can be seen as the church of the Holy Spirit and the resurrection. In all the prayers and liturgical celebrations of the Eastern Church, the Holy Spirit completes and perfects everything. In this church, there is no depiction of Christ on the cross, as it is seen as related to resurrection and salvation.[470] The Holy Spirit is the main force operating in the sacraments. Writers such as Mar Efrem, Narsay and Babai draw parallels between what took place in the incarnation of Jesus Christ and what takes place in the church in baptism and eucharist. According to Babai, the Holy Spirit formed the body of Jesus Christ and anointed it with holy oil. All this was done in order to prepare the human body to receive the logos. At the angel's greeting, in the blink of an eye, the forming, the constitution, the anointing, the assumption, and the union all took place simultaneously. Babai explains these actions of the Holy Spirit with the example of the priest's simultaneous transformation of bread and wine into the flesh and blood of Christ in his invocation of the Holy Spirit during the sacrifice. In the same way, in the voice of the angel, the Holy Spirit will come and the power of Almighty God will be transferred to man.[471] Thus, the Holy Spirit carries out the same activities during the incarnation for Christians who follow the same processes in the Church. Just as the Holy Spirit prepares the human nature of Jesus Christ to receive the divine nature, which is very important for the Eastern Church, so the Holy Spirit plays a major role in the salvation of believers through receiving divine gifts and entering the heavenly angelic realm. Through his constant presence among Christians, he makes them sons of God and brothers and sisters in Christ, brings about a new creation, transforms people into temples where they can receive divine grants, gives priesthood, grants healing and forgiveness, empowers believers against evil forces, and strengthens them against the fall of Adam.

[470] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 32.
[471] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 161-162.

the promissory note accrued with the Holy Spirit, re-clothes the lost garment of glory and enables re-entry into heaven.[472] The Holy Spirit sanctifies the water of baptism and the bread and wine of the Eucharist. He dwells in a newly baptized Christian, but in order for him to fully manage the process of sanctification, the baptized person must cooperate with him. For here the baptized receives the potential for sanctification and salvation, but the successful fulfillment of the process depends on his or her diligence throughout the process.[473]

6. MERYEM

One of the distinctive features of the Eastern Church is its preference for the title "Christotokos" (Yaldat Msiha or Imme d-Msiha/Messiah) rather than the title "Theotokos" (Yaldat Alaha/God-bearing), which other churches used for Mary. Although the use of the term Theotokos had been around since the third century, it was not widely used until the mid-V century. Nestorius' opposition to the title Theotokos and his suggestion that the title Christotokos be used instead formed the starting point of his christological dispute with Cyril. At the First Council of Ephesus (431) Nestorius was excommunicated and the title Theotokos was officially recognized. Later, in the text of the Concordat between Antioch and Alexandria (433) and at the Council of Chalcedon (451), the use of the title Theotokos was accepted. Thus, both the Monophysites and the adherents of the Council of Chalcedon were unanimous in the use of this title, and this further popularized the use of this title. The aforementioned churches accused Nestorius and the Nestorians of denying the Theotokos and accepting Mary as the mother of an ordinary human being. The Eastern Church, in turn, has consistently rejected these claims.[474] The origin of the controversy over the use of the titles Theotokos and Christotokos is essentially rooted in the idea that salvation for humanity

[472] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 44.

[473] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 133.
[474] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 80.

It is based on two different understandings of how it was realized by Christ. Since the Alexandrian tradition emphasizes the descent of the God Logos in the incarnation and his full penetration of humanity, for them the term "Theotokos" refers to Mary's role in salvation history. The Antiochene tradition, on the other hand, intellectually distinguished between the divine nature of Christ and the human nature received from Mary, since it was through the elevation of Christ's humanity that salvation was realized. Concerned that the term Theotokos might ignore the humanity of Christ, they preferred the term Christotokos.[475] Consequently, since salvation, according to the Antiochian understanding, is based on the humanity of Christ, homo assumptus (assumed, adopted man), and the idea of his elevation as a guarantee for the salvation of all humanity, the adoption of the term "Yaldat Allah" muddies salvation.[476]

Before Nestorius' use of the title Christotokos, there was a widespread opinion in this direction both in the Syriac tradition and in the Antiochian tradition. Mar Efrem did not use the title of Theotokos for Mary in his works, but used the title "Mother of Christ".[477] Theodore of Mopsuestia considered Mary to be both the mother of God and the mother of Christ, but stated that Mary was only the mother of man by nature, although divinity was found in Christ during her pregnancy. Therefore, he preferred the title Christotokos.[478] Nestorius also preferred the title Christotokos in accordance with the understanding of salvation and the diophysite Christology of the Antioch School to which he belonged.[479] Babai rejected the accusations leveled against Mary by the Monophysites and the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon and preferred the title "Mother of Christ". According to him, Mary was an ordinary human being.

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[475] Sebastian P. Brock, "Mary," *GEDSH*, 274.
[476] Brock, "The Nestorian Church: A Regrettable Nomenclature", 107.
[477] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 82.
[478] Behr, *The Case against Diodore and Theodore*, 244-245; Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 63-64; Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 79.
[479] Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, 99; Loofs, *Nestorius*, 351-352; 274-278.

It is unacceptable to say that she gave birth to Mary and to deprive her of the honor bestowed upon her. If she is called "Mother of God" in the sense that she does not take anything from our human nature, then our salvation is rendered meaningless. Therefore, it is not correct to use the name "Mother of God" for Mary in the sense that the logos uses Mary only as a means of passage and takes nothing from her. The Virgin Mary is called the mother of God and the mother of man. She is the human mother in her nature and the Mother of God in the unity realized in her womb.[480]

Although Babai prefers the title "Mother of Christ", he states that the term "Theotokos" can be used, provided that the distinctness of the two natures of Christ and their unity in one person are not prejudiced.[481] "Abdisho" bar Brikha, on the other hand, discusses the titles used for Mary and the debates around them from a broader perspective. According to him, it was a great mistake for Cyril to make it an obligation to use the term "Mother of God" for Mary. For the term "Mother of God" was not used by either the prophets or the apostles. The prophets had only prophesied about the coming of the Messiah. The apostles, in turn, heralded the birth of the Messiah from Mary, whom the prophets had foretold would come, and proved that he was both God and man. According to "Abdisho", if we use the expression "only a human mother", we are like Paul of Samaria and Phontinus of Galatia, who said that Christ was an ordinary man like the prophets. They were excommunicated. If we use the phrase "only the Mother of God" in the same way, then we are like Simon and Menander who said that God did not take any flesh from Mary, that her life and actions were imaginary and not real. They too were excommunicated. But if we call her "the Mother of Christ", it is like the prophets.

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[480] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 80-81.
[481] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 160.

and the will of the apostles and points to complete unity.[482] Babai lists three points about the drawbacks of using Theotokos for Mary. First, if the Virgin (Mary) is the mother of God and the name God, as we know it, refers to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, then it follows that the Virgin gave birth to the Trinity, not just the Son. Secondly, if the Virgin is the mother of God, then what was born of her suffered, died and was buried, as the four Gospels testify. If it is said that she really died, it follows that the one who really died has no power to resurrect himself or anyone else and must remain in death forever. "He was resurrected" would be a lie. But if it is said that he died imaginatively, then, likewise, since he did not die in reality, he is resurrected not in reality but imaginatively. According to him, then the hope of resurrection would be a delusion, and the promise of "resurrection with Christ"[483] would be invalid. Thirdly, if Mary is accepted as the "Mother of God", then there would be a contradiction between Peter's words "You are the Christ, the son of the living God"[484] and his witness to the one born of Mary. For Mary would not be the "Mother of God" as claimed, but the mother of the Father of Christ. In this case, the Messiah would be the grandson of Mary, not her son. If Mary is in fact the mother of Christ's Father, then who is the mother of Christ?[485]

The fact that the Eastern Church preferred the title Christotokos for Mary does not mean that the importance given to Mary was less than in other churches. Although the term Theotokos is not used, Mary is attributed great importance and honored w i t h rich titles and epithets.[486] However, the Eastern Church is neither Catholic

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[482] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 15.
[483] Ephesians, 2/4-6.
[484] Matthew, 16/16.
[485] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 17-18.
[486] For the adjectives and titles used for Mary in the literature of the Eastern Church, see Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam, A Study on the Liturgy of Hours for the "Praises of Mary" based on Ms. Tcr. 27.* (Kottayam: Mahatma Gandhi University, PhD dissertation, 2009), 182-258; William Toma, "Typology of Mary in the Writings of East Syriac Fathers", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal* (Accessed 21. 05. 2019).

churches, nor does it overdo it in respect and honor, as the Protestant Churches do, nor does it pay less attention, as the Protestant Churches do. It stands somewhere in the middle.[487] Mariology (the science of Mary) is an important discipline of Christian theology, but it has not developed as an independent discipline among Eastern Christians. In the Eastern Church, however, Mary has been an integral part of disciplines such as Christology, pneumatology, and ecclesiology, in particular because of her association with the human nature of Christ and the theology of salvation.[488] The Syriac tradition has expressed its views on Mary not through dogmatic formulas or a systematic theology, as in the Latin tradition, but through the use of rich symbols, images and typologies incorporated into the liturgy. Although she has been described with many prestigious titles, such as "Mother of Christ", "Mother of the Son of God", "Servant of Divinity and Mother of Humanity", "Temple of the Holy Spirit", etc., she has been regarded primarily as the mother of Christ and not as above or equal to the Son.[489]

Most of the titles used for Mary in the Church tradition are related to the subject of Christology. Because Jesus Christ, who is considered both God and man, received his humanity from Mary. Because of this relationship, expressed as the "mother of Christ", she had various privileges. As a result of her divine motherhood, she is described as an "eternal virgin". She became pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit, gave birth to and raised the Messiah. Mary's divine motherhood is expressed in images such as "the New Sky, the King's castle, the temple of God". These expressions have a Christological reference since they refer to her bearing the Logos of God. In this respect, its role in revealing the miracle of the incarnation is highly valued. Because Adam and Eve disobeyed and sinned by eating the fruit of the "Tree of Knowledge".

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[487] Lois Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 32; Mar Aprem G. Mooken, "Is the Theology of the Assyrian Church Nestorian?", *Syriac Dialogue: First Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition* (Vienna: 1994), 150.
[488] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 307; Toma, "Typology of Mary", 2.

[489] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 260; Toma, "Typology of Mary", 1-2; Brock, "Mary", *GEDSH*, 274.

The "Tree of Life", the Messiah, who would undo the destructive effect it had on mankind. Mary's obedience to God's command paved the way for humanity to re-enter paradise and possess the tree of life.[490] The Messiah was born from the Father in his divine nature and from Mary in his human nature; he humbled himself out of compassion, took humanity from Mary and saved humanity.[491] In one of his poems, Ephrem expresses the following from Mary's mouth: "The Son of the Most High came and dwelt in me. I became his mother, and as I gave birth to him, so he gave birth to me a second time in his second birth. He (Christ) was clothed with the body of his mother, and I am clothed with his glory."[492] Narsay uses the title "Second Heaven" for Mary because of the indwelling of divinity in her.[493] For him, heaven refers to the place where God dwells, and when the Son of God descended to earth, he became the second heaven because he dwelt in Mary. Mary is characterized as the dwelling place of fire[494] , which in the Old Testament is envisioned as a sign of God's presence. The Holy Spirit, invoked during the Eucharist, is symbolized by fire. A similarity is drawn between the divinity, symbolized by fire during the Incarnation, taking up residence in Mary and the Holy Spirit transforming bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ during the Eucharist. According to Ephrem, who likened divinity to a fire, the fire settled in Mary's womb, took on a body and appeared there. Fire is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit, and in the Eucharist this spirit and fire transform the bread and wine. Thus, the person who receives the bread and wine is born again.[495]

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[490] Sebastian Brock, *Bride of Light*, *Hymns on Mary from the Syriac Churches*, Moran "Etho Series 6 (Kottayam: Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute, 1994), 35; Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 261.
[491] Sebastian Brock, *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World Vision of St. Ephrem*, Placid Lectures 6 (Rome: Centre for Indian and Inter-Religious Studies, 1985), 65.
[492] Sebastian Brock, *The Harp of the Spirit, Twelve Poems of St Ephrem* (London: 1975), 15.
[493] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 265.
[494] I Kings, 18/38.
[495] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 11-14.

In the Eastern Church, Mary's relationship with the Holy Spirit is generally in the context of Christology and salvation. The Holy Spirit prepared Mary to receive the Logos of God. In this respect, he first consecrated Mary's womb and then the logos, which is "might", was implanted in her. The Holy Spirit, first conceived as feminine because the word "might" is masculine, made Mary's womb ready, and then the might of the Most High enveloped her and the Logos, the God Logos, settled in her.[496] Mary is therefore described as a supreme place of the Holy Spirit. The term "agen" for the activity of the Holy Spirit includes the activity of the Holy Spirit in relation to Mary. In this respect, the Holy Spirit's work in Mary during the incarnation is related to what happens at the altar in the Eucharist through the power of the Holy Spirit. Just as Mary obeyed God's command during the incarnation and became the place of the God Logos through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christians can become the bearer of divinity and be born again through the power of the Holy Spirit by obeying God's command in the sacrament of communion, just like Mary.[497] Mary's cooperation and submission during the incarnation is a model of how man's relationship with God should be. Here the process of reestablishing a solid relationship between man and God and between the material and the divine is accomplished through the activity of the Holy Spirit. This is central to the mystery of both the Incarnation and the Eucharist. In this respect, Mary has a historical role in that she gave birth to God in a body at a certain point in history, and an eschatological role in that she represents the elevation of humanity as a whole to divinity at the end of time.[498] The Eastern Church attaches special significance to Mary's role in the context of the history of the salvation of humanity.

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[496] Sebastian Brock, "Mary in Syriac Tradition", ed. A. Stacpoole, *Mary "s Place in Chistian Dialogue* (Slough: 1982), 184; *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 4.
[497] Brock, *Bride of Light*, 12; *The Syrian Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life*, Cistercian Studies 101, Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 360.
[498] Sebastian P. Brock, "Mary and The Eucharist: an oriental perspective", ed. by Jocob Vellian, *Studies in Syriac Spirituality (SSS)*, Part 4, (Kottayom: 1988), 39.

The trinitarian relationship with Christotokos is in question. While the Eastern Christian world focuses on Mary in the design of salvation, Western theology since Augustine has emphasized Mary as an example and an apostle.[499] Since the absence of Mary means the absence of the incarnation, the Syriac tradition emphasizes Mary.[500]

Although Mariology did not develop as a separate discipline in the Eastern Church, there were various discussions about Mary's motherhood, virginity, intercession and mediation, sinlessness and ascension. However, these issues were not generally treated as dogma. The views on these issues can be traced between the lines of the liturgical texts of the Eastern Church. Regarding Mary's motherhood (Divine Motherhood), the term "Theotokos" (Yaldat Alaha) is not used in the anaphora, daily prayers or any sacrament, whereas the term "Christotokos" (Yaldat Msiha) is frequently used. From early on, the Eastern Church adopted the view that Mary remained a virgin both during and after childbirth (the Eternal Virgin-/ bthulah "almeen). There is a rich literature on this subject.[501]

In the Eastern Church, although Mary was characterized with adjectives such as holy, sinless, chaste and spotless, her being sinless and innocent was not treated as a doctrine.[502] The Catholic Church, with the "Immaculate Conception of Mary" published by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854, accepted as a dogma that Mary was born free from original sin from the moment of conception.[503] The Eastern Church is committed to the doctrine of original sin.

had a different opinion on this issue. In 596, Catholicos Sabrisho

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[499] Paul Haffner, *The Mystery of Mary*, (Chicago: Gracewing Hillenbrand-Books, 2004), 9.
[500] Brock, "Mary in Syriac Tradition", 183.
[501] Toma, "Typology of Mary", 3; Badger, *Nestorians and their Rituals*, 2/56, 65.
[502] Mar Aprem, *The Nestorian Theology* (Trichur: Mar Narsai Press, 1980), 115; Badger, *Nestorian and Their Rituals*, 2/52.
[503] *Principles of Religion and Ethics of the Catholic Church*, trans. Dominik Pamir (Istanbul: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006), 78.

According to the minutes of the synod, the views that sin is inherent in human nature and that Adam's nature was originally created immortal were rejected. In this respect, those who said that sin is inherent in human nature, that man does not sin by choice, and that Adam's nature was originally created immortal were excommunicated.[504] The aforementioned view of the Catholic Church has been evaluated from this perspective. Accordingly, the idea that Mary was free from original sin seems to be problematic for the Eastern Church. This should not be seen as an objection to the fact that Mary was protected from sin. The Eastern Church already recognizes that Mary did not commit any sin. However, the idea that Mary's sinlessness is associated with her protection from Adam's original sin is irrelevant for the Church. For the Eastern Church does not agree with the idea that sin is inherent in human nature or that it is a quality of human nature. On the contrary, it emphasized that the essence of human nature is goodness. Therefore, Mary's holiness, sinlessness and grace did not need to be associated with the understanding of the "Immaculate Conception". This should be seen as a special act of protection by God for Mary.[505]

With regard to another important dogma of the Catholic Church, "the assumption of Mary with her body and soul after death"[506] , which was accepted by Pope Pius XII on November 1, 1950, there is no detailed information about the assumption of Mary in the old manuscripts of the Eastern Church liturgical texts. However, in a karozutha prayer used on the feast of the Virgin Mary, celebrated on August 15, t h e r e are words about her assumption into heaven.

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[504] *Synodicon Orientale,* 456-460.
[505] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 311.
[506] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 152.

However, the earliest mention of this prayer is found in a manuscript dated 1681.[507] Suleiman of Basra, an Eastern Church writer of the eighteenth century, states in his work *The Book of Bees* that Mary was not buried in the ground and that her coffin was raised to heaven by angels.[508] In fact, in the Christian world, the earliest data on Mary's death and bodily assumption are based on apocryphal texts from the Vth and Vth centuries and this view was not accepted by most of the early church fathers. The most important source on the death and assumption of Mary, the Latin work *Transitus Mariae, was* declared apocryphal in the sixth century by a papal bull called "Decretum Gelasianum". Nevertheless, it was very popular with early Christians and spread rapidly throughout the West in the Middle Ages.[509] Considering that Solomon of Basra dealt with the assumption of Mary in the Middle Ages, it is clear that this view was treated in parallel in the Western and Eastern Churches. However, the idea of the Assumption of Mary was not seen in the early periods of the Eastern Church, nor was it treated as a dogma in the later periods.

The Eastern Church claims the mediation and intercession of Mary, directly or indirectly. This is considered in the general context of the mediation of the saints. The Virgin Mary is assigned a place just above the saints and martyrs. In this regard, it is understood that Mary has a distinguished place in the prayers and hymns of the Church:

> "O Holy Mary, mother of Jesus our Savior, ask for mercy from the Son who was born from your womb. For only he, through his grace, can remove the times of sorrow from us, and sprinkle peace and tranquillity upon us. Through your prayers the Church and her children are protected from evil". "The Blessed Virgin is always a great refuge for the faithful who ask for her prayers. May our parish be blessed by the power of her prayers". "O mortals, come, let us take refuge under the wings of the Blessed Mother. Only in this way can we be worthy of forgiveness."[510]

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[507] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 318.
[508] Solomon of al-Basra, *The Book of the Bee*, ed. E.A.W Budge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), 110-111.
[509] Saliha Gülnur Uzuner, *Katolik Mezhebine Göre İsa "nın Annesi Mary (A*nkara: Ankara University SBE, MA Thesis, 2015), 25, 137.
[510] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 321.

It is clear from these and similar statements that the Eastern Church seeks refuge in Mary's prayers. She is asked to mediate, not to fulfill the wishes and desires of Christian individuals. With the expression "Pray with us", Mary is reduced to the level of a person who prays with the worshippers rather than praying for them. However, it must be recognized that the Eastern Church attaches great importance to Mary's prayers.[511] The Eastern Church does not use statues and images of Mary, even though she is held in high esteem and is of great importance.[512]

7. CREATION AND ORIGINAL SIN

In the Eastern Church, creation is considered in relation to the concept of "mdabbranutha". According to this concept, which covers topics such as God's plan of salvation for humanity and the divine incarnation, creation is envisioned as a historical process that continues according to a specific plan and purpose. This historical process, as described in the Old Testament, began with the creation of the universe, the creation and fall of Adam, and God's divine intervention for the salvation of humanity; It culminated with the coming, incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ as depicted in the New Testament; it continues with the descent of the Holy Spirit and His grace and mercy for the salvation of humanity; and it concludes with the second coming of Jesus Christ and the final judgment. Mar "Abdisho" bar Brikha provides a brief summary of the Eastern Church's understanding of creation. According to this, any action is performed either out of compulsion, necessity or goodness. Since there is no other deity besides God, the universe was not created because of any compulsion. This is because there is no other nature that can compel God to perform an action. Likewise, since His nature is free from any kind of deficiency and performs every action completely, the universe was not created because of any necessity.

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[511] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 322.
[512] Mar Aprem, *The Nestorian Theology*, 135.

God did not perform the act of creation. In short, God's creation of the universe is based entirely on His goodness (salah) and love, without any compulsion or necessity. This is because God is the source of goodness (salah) and blessing. He first created the angels, the heavens, the four elements, the light, the stars, and then the plants, trees and animal species. The work of creation ended on the sixth day. Adam the First, the father of humanity, was created in the image of God.[513]

Abdişo attributes the creation of Adam in the image of God to three reasons. The first is that the nafs al-natika represents the image of divinity by virtue of its spirituality, transparency and abstractness, and that this nafs al-natika symbolizes the Trinity with its intellect, speech (wisdom) and life. Secondly, because of the power, sovereignty and free will given to it. The third is that in union with him (incarnation) he intends to make him a temple (dwelling place).[514] The reasons given for the creation of man in the image of God are closely related to the Christological view of the Nestorian Church. According to this view, Adam (man) was created in the image of God in order for the God Logos to be united through the incarnation with a full human being who has reason, speech and life. Here it is pointed out that the human nature of Jesus Christ is a full human nature and that this nature has free will. "Abdişo" goes on to say that God placed Adam, a small world, on earth, a large world, then created woman from his rib and placed them both in the paradise prepared for them. They were commanded to eat the fruit of every tree in Paradise, but not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For they were told that they would die as soon as they ate from it. According to him, this shows that Adam and his wife had free will. If they did not have free will, the punishment for disobeying the command would have been unjust. Adam and his wife trampled on God's commandment by succumbing to the temptation of the evil and arrogant spirit and Satan's temptation was to make them disobey the commandment.

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[513] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 9.
[514] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 9.

They have disobeyed their Creator with their rebellion. Therefore, they were destined for death, bowed down to Satan, deprived of honor, clothed in the garment of shame, excluded from the company of angels, and cast into the realm of damnation (the earth). Their children, too, continued to live in opposition to God's commandment and were subjected to Satan and death. They forgot their Creator, followed their whims and fancies, and spread evil and rebellion on earth. All but those who boarded the ark with the prophet Noah were destroyed, the world was cleansed of evil and this savage way of life was put to an end. "Abdişo" states that after Noah got off the ark, God sent some laws for people to follow. As time progressed, people moved away from these laws and began to worship idols. As the people tried to build a tower in Babel that would reach the heavens, God confused their languages and they had languages that they could not understand each other. So they scattered throughout the world and continued to practice idolatry. God then chose Abraham to establish an eternal temple among his descendants, and established circumcision as a sign of the covenant between them and made a covenant with him. Thus, according to him, began the order of worship called Hebrew (Jewish). After this, God sent a succession of eminent and righteous men to keep them on the right path. But in spite of all their efforts, they could not lead the people back to God's way. When Moses, the leader of the prophets, was chosen, God gave him honor and written laws for the people to follow, which had not been given in earlier times. Thus began the era of the Jews who, like a child who had not yet attained perfect knowledge, were subject to the old law of doing good to good doers and relatives and doing evil to evil doers and enemies. God is pictured as a man with bodily limbs, dwelling in Jerusalem, a member of Mount Zion and the community of Israel. "Abisho" says that it (the Law of Moses) speaks of neither hell nor the kingdom of heaven. It speaks of the judgment against the transgressors of the law.

Corporal punishments were imposed. All the prophets after Moses followed this path and were subjected to many persecutions and dangers.[515]

After narrating the Old Testament narratives from a Christian perspective, "Abdisho", under the title "mdabbranutha completed in Christ", narrates the New Testament prophecies about the Messiah, his coming, incarnation, death and resurrection.[516] After stating that despite all the struggles of the prophets, they were not able to bring people to the knowledge of the truth that would enable them to obey the divine commandments for salvation, he states that there is no other way for the renewal of human nature and the restoration of life than the appearance of God in this world. Accordingly, by revealing the hidden mysteries, Christ atoned for the original sin inherited from Adam and removed the judgment of sinfulness against his own kind.[517]

"Original Sin", one of the most important dogmas of Christianity, is based on the understanding that the original sin committed by Adam and Eve in paradise when they disobeyed God's command and ate the forbidden fruit was passed on to all humanity from generation to generation. [518]Although this belief is rooted in the Old Testament, it was first reinterpreted in Christianity by Paul. Accordingly, sin entered the world because of Adam's guilt and death entered the world because of sin. Because of Adam, all men have become sinners. While the First Adam brought sin and death into the world, the Second Adam, Jesus Christ, brought salvation and eternal life.[519] The term original sin was used for the first time by Augustine and became a doctrine. It was accepted that all human beings descended from Adam and Eve were inherently guilty of this crime and would be punished. Mary's

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[515] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 9-10.
[516] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 10-11.
[517] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 13.
[518] Genesis, 2/7-25; 3/1-24.
[519] Romans, 5/12-21.

God, who appeared to Jesus in the womb, sent his own sinless Son, who died on the cross to atone for this sin. Humans will be saved from Original Sin through baptism.[520]

Original sin was not treated as a doctrine in this sense in the Eastern Church. Mar Efrem emphasized both the primacy of faith and free will.[521] His work reflects the reciprocal relationship between creation and the historical process, God's pedagogical activity towards man and man's effort to understand and comprehend God, which is an important feature of the Eastern Church. In Syriac, the term "yulpana" for pedagogy (educational activities) is used as the equivalent of the Greek term "paideia". This understanding of pedagogy is closely linked to the very limited use of allegory and the interpretation of sacred texts in their historical context. Mar Efrem depicts the various stages of human history as a process in which the grace and mercy of God and the free will of man play a reciprocal role. According to him, the believer can discover divine grace not only through the parables and symbols of the Old Testament, but also in the material world in which he lives.[522]

Theodore of Mopsuestia rejected Augustine's doctrine of inherited sin and wrote a work, fragments of which have survived, against those who said that man falls by nature and not by condemnation. He rejected the propositions that man was originally created good and immortal, but became evil and mortal because of Adam's sin, and therefore sin is inherent in human nature, not due to human will.[523] In his commentary on the Nicene Creed

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[520] Günay Tümer, "Original Sin", *DİA* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 1991), 3/496.
[521] Sebastian Brock, *Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World of Saint Ephrem*, 23-36.
[522] Lucas Van Rompay, "The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation", ed. Magne Saebo, *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation 1. From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (Until 1300) 1. Antiquity* (Göttingen: 1996), 623-626.
[523] W. Müller, "Theodore of Mopsuestia", ed. Philip Schaff, *A Religious Encyclopaedia or Dictionary of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical Theology*, 3rd edn (Toronto, New York, London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1891), 4/2325-26.

While interpreting the incarnation and becoming human, he discusses the relationship between sin, death, free will and salvation in the light of the christological views of the School of Antioch. According to him, sin arises from the will of the soul. Satan's temptation was accepted not by the body of Adam, who was composed of a body and a soul, but by his soul, and he chose to disobey God. Thus, sin came into the world because of the guilt of one man (Adam) and death came into the world because of sin, and all men became mortal. According to him, for death to be abolished, sin must be abolished. If a human being brought sin into the world and death in connection with it, then the resurrection from the dead can only take place through a human being. Therefore, the God Logos had to adopt and acquire not only a human body, but also a complete human being with an immortal and rational soul. Thus, not only the death of the body was abolished, but also the sin that results from the will of the rational soul. According to Mopsuestian, it must be recognized that Christ had to have a human soul in order to overcome the desires of the flesh, sin and finally death. Since the human nature of Jesus Christ, by God's grace and mercy, did not fall into sin despite all the temptations of Satan, it first overcame sin and then naturally abolished death.[524] Parallel to Mar Efrem, Mopsuestian's interpretation of biblical history as a reflection of God's pedagogical measures (yulpana) aimed at leading man to eternal life in paradise is very much in line with his Christology of salvation.[525] For him, the creation of man with free will and the ability to overcome sin is crucial for the salvation of humanity. In this respect, Christ adopted the rational soul along with the human body.

Narsay, like Ephrem, rejected the idea that original sin is passed on to human beings through inheritance. God created man in His own image to be sovereign over the universe. Because of his sin, Adam only stayed in paradise for one day. His own free will

[524] Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 56-58.
[525] Rompay, "The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation", 634.

He disobeyed God's command with his will. According to Narsay, phenomena such as work, fatigue, pain, death, etc., which accrue to human beings, are related to human nature and were not given to human beings because of Adam's original sin. God had already created man mortal.[526] At the 596 synod organized by Catholicos Sabrisho, an official decision was taken regarding original sin. According to this: "Some say that sin is implanted in nature and others say that Adam's nature was originally created immortal... Those who say that sin is implanted in nature and that man does not sin by choice and that Adam's nature was originally created immortal, let them leave our fellowship."[527]

Babai, one of the most important theologians of the Eastern Church, interprets sin and free will through the human nature of Christ, which he regards as a prototype for man. Babai recognizes the union of a soul and a body, which he describes as an immaterial and rational nature, as a human knoma. Accordingly, the human nature of Christ is a knoma consisting of a material body and a rational soul. The soul is essential for knowledge of the material world and of God. The rational soul of man has the qualities of free will and reasoning. Thanks to this quality, it is able to choose good and evil. According to him, the human nature of Christ experienced temptation by the devil and sin like every human being. If one accepts that the rational spirit of Jesus Christ's human nature was swallowed up by the divine nature, as the Monophysites thought, then the role of human free will in Christ's struggle against the temptations of the devil and the desires of the flesh is ignored. According to Babai, the knowledge possessed by the rational soul of the human Christ can only be attributed to God's wisdom, not His nature, and can be recognized as a gift of the Spirit. The attribution of Christ's struggle against sin to his human nature, which has free will, m a k e s i t possible for people to attain salvation by imitating his individual experience. The New

[526] Sako, *Abauna "s-Syrians*, 105-106
[527] *Synodicon Orientale,* 456-457.

The Testament says, "Christ, though the heavenly Son of God, learned obedience to God through suffering. Thus he became perfect. He brought eternal salvation to all who obeyed him."[528] He interprets this statement to mean that the human knoma of Christ had to experience temptation, suffering, and obedience in order to attain perfection and immortality, just like other human beings. For him, Jesus' obedience in fulfilling the will of God with his own free will has a strong soteriological character and is the ultimate example for man. "For our high priest is not one who is unable to sympathize with us in our weaknesses; on the contrary, he has been tempted in all things as we are, but has not sinned".[529] According to him, although Jesus Christ was a son born from the womb with the God Logos in the only begotten sonship, he learned obedience through his suffering and was thus perfected. For he did not know what they were like until he effectively received immortality and immutability in a human knoma. Likewise, he did not know the sufferings until he experienced them, for they are not natural and fixed. Therefore, he did not learn without being tested and did not acquire knowledge of the things by which he was tested. According to him, in this case the truth of the sentence "Jesus was growing in wisdom and stature, gaining the favor of God and men" is revealed. Therefore, everything he endured in the human knoma is true.[530] It is clear from these statements that the free will of Christ's human nature and its triumph over sin in his experience in the desert, and his acceptance of union with the logos through good will, set an example for others to attain salvation.

One of the distinctive features of the School of Antioch is that sin is not considered an essential feature of human nature, but a consequence of human free will. The Eastern Church's understanding of sin and free will; the Antiochian School's biblical

[528] Hebrews, 5/8-9.
[529] Hebrews, 4/15.
[530] Metselaar-Jongens, *Defining Christ*, 123-124, 148-150.

It is shaped by the pedagogical and soteriological perspective inherent in his literal and historical reading of the Bible. The humanity of Christ, with a full human nature consisting of a body and a rational soul, is taken as a prototype for all believers. This human nature, like all other human beings, has free will. Just as Christ's human nature gained the honor of the Son of God by having free will and voluntarily uniting with the God Logos in a prosopon, so human beings can, with their free will, imitate the experience of Christ's human nature and attain immortality in the kingdom of heaven. Ignoring human free will and emphasizing only divine grace and mercy is rejected. The Christian must strive and endeavor to attain eternal life. In this regard, Bawai Soro, a contemporary theologian of the Church of the East, in his presentation at the "Orientals Lumen III" conference, *Mary in the Catholic-Assyrian Dialogue: The Assyrian Perspective in the Catholic-Assyrian Dialogue,* summarizes the Eastern Church's viewpoint as follows:

> "To be honest, it must be said that the doctrine of Mary's sinless birth is problematic for the Eastern Church. This is not for any reason that one can dispute the fact that Mary was preserved from sin - which she was... For the Eastern Church, the idea of linking Mary's sinlessness with her preservation from the stain of Adam's sin is irrelevant. The Church Fathers did not believe that sin was inherent in human nature or that it was a quality of human nature. On the contrary, they emphasized that what is essential in human nature is goodness. For them, Mary's holiness, sinlessness and virtue did not require the acceptance of a conception of the "Immaculate Conception", but only as a special act of God's protection."[531]

8. BELIEF IN JUDGMENT AND THE AFTERLIFE

In Christianity, the resurrection after death and the afterlife is one of the main theological issues. In this respect, creation is considered within the framework of a certain program and purpose. According to "Abdisho", one who begins an action must have a goal. When he reaches his goal, he stops his action and brings it to an end. Otherwise it is in vain

[531] Bawai Soro, "Mary in the Catholic-Assyrian Dialogue: An Assyrian Perspective" read in *Orientals Lumen* III *Conference* (Washington DC: June 1999). Cited in Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 311.

to deal with the universe. According to him, our God, who has supreme wisdom, did not create the universe in vain or leave it unattended. He created it with a sublime wisdom and a sublime purpose to reform the mind and perfect the form. "Abdisho" states that this world will come to an end when the appointed time is over. For every beginning has an end, or every end has a beginning.[532] Although there are various references in the New Testament and in the apostolic tradition to the end of the world and the stages of the afterlife, such as the resurrection, the second coming of Christ, the divine judgment, etc., it should be noted that in the Christian tradition there is a speculative theology and no clear dogmatic teaching on what happens after death. In this regard, theologians from various traditions, such as Syriac, Greek and Latin, have given detailed accounts of the state of the soul after death, the intermediate period from death to the end of the world, and eternal life. Traditionally, divine judgment and the afterlife are considered in two dimensions: on an individual scale and on the scale of humanity in general. On the individual scale, the individual experience of the soul after death, and on the general scale, the end of time, the new heavenly life, and the final judgment in which Christ judges.[533]

Early Eastern Church Fathers such as Afrahat, Mar Efrem and Narsay, based on Paul's definition of man[534] , consider man in the triadic dimension of body, soul (spirit of life) and (Holy) Spirit. Here, the material body and the spirit of life constitute the human being, while the Holy Spirit penetrates the human being after baptism. Death is defined as a state of light sleep with a semi-conscious awareness of what is happening. At death the material body decays, but the soul (spirit of life) and the Holy Spirit are immortal. This tradition describes Adam, depicted in paradise before the fall, as "sabra". This description is based on Adam's immaturity, lack of experience and

[532] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 29.
[533] William Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul after Death in the writings Fathers of the Church of the East", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal* (Accessed: 18. 07. 2019), 1.

[534] "May God Himself, the God of peace, make you perfectly holy. May your *spirit, soul and body be* preserved complete and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ". 1 Thessalonians 5/23.

It is interpreted as not being competent in terms of spiritual maturity. As such, Adam only has the potential to become the heir of paradise. However, this state realized in paradise does not represent the final and perfect will of God to enter the angelic realm of the heavens. In this respect, for the Syriac fathers, the perfection of humanity is seen as an ultimate goal realized at the end of time, not at the starting point or at the moment of creation. God intends to guide humanity through a process of learning and training in order to bring it to its ultimate goal, the heavenly kingdom. The first couple's brief stay in paradise was part of the process of giving them a perfect life. The ultimate goal of human perfection can therefore be achieved in the afterlife.[535]

According to the Afrahat, in accordance with the triune dimension of man, at his natural physical birth he is endowed with the spirit of life (rukha nawshanaita), which is the essence of natural life[536] and then through baptism (spiritual birth) he is endowed with the heavenly spirit, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.[537] After this process, he becomes a son or daughter of God by adoption and shares in the mission of Christ by being incorporated into his body. According to him, in the state of death, which is called "sleep", the heavenly spirit, which has passed into the person through baptism, returns to its own nature.[538] In death, however, the spirit of life does not leave the body, but is buried with it and the power of feeling is taken away from it. He explains the lack of feeling as the fact that the spirit of life is buried in its own nature and is deprived of emotion and lacks the ability to discern good and evil. This is because the soul is embedded in its own nature and lacks the ability to feel. However, the lack of feeling does not mean an absolute void of consciousness during death (sleep). Accordingly, righteous people rest with a good sense of justice during death, which is likened to sleep, are in hopeful expectation, and are in a state of expectation with the resurrection (apocalypse).

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[535] Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul", 1-4.
[536] Genesis, 2/7; 1 Corinthians, 15/45.

[537] 1 Corinthians 15/44.
[538] 1 Corinthians 15/44; 2 Corinthians 5/6-7.

they are relieved. In contrast, evil people spend this period in a state of restlessness and uneasiness because they sense impending torment. Accordingly, the soul is active to a certain extent, experiencing the pre-experience of heaven or hell, depending on its condition. According to the tradition of the Eastern Church, on the third day God will decide how the soul of a dead person will spend this time until the second coming of Christ.[539]

Mar Efrem, like Afrahat, is based on the triune dimension of the human being. According to him, the spirit of life invites the Holy Spirit to dwell in both soul and body when it loves the body in which it resides and gets along harmoniously with it, expelling evil and demonic forces. According to him, Adam's material body was created outside of heaven and was placed in heaven only after he became a fully alive being after the spirit of life was breathed into him. At death, the Holy Spirit returns to its place with God in heaven, but unlike Afrahat, Mar Efrem believes that the body and the spirit of life are separated from each other, and that only at the resurrection (the Resurrection) are the two reunited. According to him, righteous people who die are not dead, but fall into a deep sleep that lasts until the day of final judgment. In this respect, he describes the state after death and before the resurrection as a deep sleep. Although he states that after death the soul has semi-conscious knowledge, it loses its senses and memory. He speculates on where the soul, which continues to live after death, goes after it leaves the decaying body through the story of the penitent thief crucified with Jesus Christ. Regarding the words of Jesus Christ, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise"[540] , he says the following about whether the soul goes to paradise after death:

> "After death, the soul cannot enter Paradise without a body. For an imperfect thing cannot enter heaven; the soul separated from the body is imperfect in terms of senses and consciousness. However, on the Day of Resurrection, after the body has been made perfect in all its senses through union with the soul

[539] Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul "3-5.
[540] Luke, 23/39-43.

then it will enter there. In this case, during the time from death until the resurrection, the soul will wait in exquisite mansions on the borders of Paradise, waiting to be united with its body at the resurrection, and then it will enter Paradise. Because with the final resurrection, the body and soul will be united in perfection and will be able to enter heaven. Jesus Christ's statement above must therefore be understood as the soul obtaining the keys of heaven."[541]

Mar Efrem describes Gehenna as a waiting ground for all souls, good and bad, until the final resurrection. He makes no distinction between the place of good and evil souls after death; both souls will remain in Gehenna. He personifies Satan and Azrael as the guardians of the souls in Gehenna. Like the guardian at the tomb of the crucified Christ, Satan and Azrael will guard the souls until Christ's second descent to earth when He will ask for their release. Here Satan and the Grim Reaper are described as passive and will be subject to Christ's commands.[542] According to Ephrem, the union of body and soul for the entrance into paradise mirrors the Old Testament story of "Creation": When Adam was complete, the Lord took him and placed him in paradise. The Adam of the Genesis story did not enter paradise until his body and soul were united. According to him, body and soul are reunited in the resurrection. He likens death to sleeping and resurrection to waking up. According to him, only in the final Resurrection will the body with all its senses enter heaven after it has been perfected. Ephrem does not mention where the souls live after Christ defeats death in Sheol or Gehenna. However, he does mention that the righteous souls have a pre-experience of heaven and the wicked souls have a pre-experience of hell while they await the day of judgment. Ephrem, flames and heaven

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[541] Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul", 6-8.

[542] We find Ephrem's Gehanna-like imagery in the Adamic narrative of the Lord coming out of heaven to redeem Adam, entering Sheol, bringing Adam out of it, and taking him back to paradise. Ephrem here reflects the atonement (atoment) theory elaborated by the early Church Fathers such as Origen, Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine, who regarded the atonement as "the victory of Christ". According to this narrative, Adam and Eve sold humanity to Satan during the fall. God then had to pay a ransom of redemption to free humanity from Satan's clutches. Since Satan could not imagine that Christ could be freed from the bonds of death, he accepted his death and descent into "the realm of the dead" as a ransom for salvation. However, Christ surprised Satan by his resurrection from the dead and thus saved Adam's humanity from Satan's grasp. See Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul", 9.

He draws a distinction between the places he calls Sheol and heaven. "Brothers and sisters, a way lies before us all: from childhood to death, and from death to the Resurrection; so that it divides into two paths, one to the flames and the other to heaven." It is clear from his statements that Sheol is temporary, while heaven and the flames (hell) are eternal.[543]

In the tradition of the Eastern Church, one of the most important works that provides comprehensive information about the state of the soul after death and the afterlife is the sixty-chapter work entitled *The Book of Bees* by Suleiman of Basra. The last chapters of this work cover topics such as the end of the world, the signs of the apocalypse, Gog and Dajjjaj, Antichrist, death and the state of the disembodied soul, the second coming of Jesus, the general resurrection, the last day of judgment, and heaven and hell. Suleiman of Basra set a date of 5345 years from Adam to the birth of Jesus Christ. In the work attributed to Methodius, Bishop of Rome, he mentions prophecies about the end of time and the change of the kingdom. Accordingly, when the victory of the Ismailis (Muslim Arabs) is finalized, the misfortunes will be doubled and there will be a great famine. In the meantime, the people will live in misery while the oppressors will live in luxury and splendor, boasting of their victories and saying, "The Christians have neither a God nor a savior to save them". At that very moment the King of the Greeks will appear and put an end to the rule of the Ishmaelites. Every nation will return to its own land. Then the human population will increase greatly. The King of the Greeks will attack those who deny Christ and there will be great peace in the world. Churches and monasteries will be established and priests will be exempt from taxes and people will live in peace.[544] Meanwhile, nations called Gog and Magog, who had been imprisoned in the north by King Alexander, will suddenly appear. They will cause great turmoil in the world and people will flee in terror. So many people will die that there will be no one to bury them. They will be almost

[543] Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul", 5-9.
[544] Solomon of al-Basra, *The Book of the Bee*, 124-127.

the world will be destroyed and there will be no power to stop them. But at God's command angels will descend to earth and destroy them all at once on the plain of Joppa.[545] Very soon after the destruction of Gog and Magog, the Antichrist will appear. According to him, the Antichrist was conceived in Chorazin, born in Bethsaida and grew up in Capernaum. With the appearance of the Antichrist, the King of the Greeks will ascend the Hill of Golgotha, lay his royal crown on the top of the Holy Cross and open his hands towards the kingdom of God the Father. The Holy Cross and with it the royal crown will be taken to the heavenly angelic realm and the king will die immediately. After that, there will be disasters in the world, such as chaos, famine, etc. In the meantime, the Antichrist will begin to impress people with miraculous events other than raising the dead. He will gather people around him saying, "I am the Messiah," enter Jerusalem, sit on the throne, and declare himself to be God. This will last for two and a half years or three years and six months. At this time of despair Elijah will come from heaven to lead people to the true God, to proclaim the true identity of the Antichrist and to strengthen the believers.[546]

Sulayman of Basra states that when the soul leaves the body at death, angels accompany it. The forces of evil go out to meet this soul and see if there is anything of their own in it. The angels do not hinder them in this process. If there is nothing in the soul that belongs to the forces of evil, then they cannot have any influence on it. If the soul emerges victorious from this meeting, then the angels sing hymns of praise until it meets God happily. From that moment on, the soul forgets all the affairs of the world. Consequently, no one who has not received forgiveness of sins in this world will be exempt from the punishment of trial on that day. Suleiman of Basra enumerates the various views expressed in the Syriac, Greek and Latin traditions, without making a definitive judgment as to where the souls remain after leaving their bodies until the time of resurrection. That the souls of the righteous pray and their prayers

[545] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 127-129.
[546] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 129-131.

recognizes that they help those who take refuge in them. Therefore, it is only right that those who take refuge in any holy person should rejoice in their journey towards the Lord in heaven.[547] After giving this intermediate information, Suleiman of Basra continues. After Elijah comes down from heaven and defeats the Antichrist, at a time and place known only to God, the life-giving cross of the Lord, carried by the Archangel Gabriel, will appear. Its light will drown out the light of the sun, and the heathen and the Jews will weep and lament. According to him, as Theodore of Mopsuestia said, the victory of Christ will precede him. Then a powerful light will fill the whole dome between heaven and earth. Suddenly the powerful trumpet of the archangel will sound. At the first blowing of the trumpet by the archangel, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, the stars will fall from the sky and the power of the heavens will be shaken. The earth will shake and tremble, the mountains and hills will melt, the seas will be turned upside down, the heavens will be destroyed with a great thunder, the material elements will be burned up, and everything will be destroyed except for a few survivors. Those who survive the Hour will not sleep the sleep of death. At the sound of the second trumpet, the heavens will open and the Lord will appear and descend in great glory and splendor. He will then remove the Antichrist, destroy his body and soul and cast Satan and the demons into Gehenna. After the third and last trumpet, as Paul said: "The last trumpet will sound and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we will be changed. When the trumpet sounds, the dead will be raised with immortal bodies. We who are still alive will also be changed."[548] The resurrection of humans according to the spiritual nature of the new world will take place very rapidly. The entire human generation will be resurrected in the blink of an eye. After the resurrection of the dead, Christ will end the world. Humans will be the first to be resurrected and they will watch with their own eyes the end of the world and its destruction. From that moment on, the wicked will experience sorrow and

[547] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 131-132.
[548] 1 Corinthians 15/52.

The righteous will feel joy.[549] All people will be thirty-three years old at the resurrection, the age at which Christ rose from the dead, and will be perfect in every limb. Those buried in a carnal body will be raised in a spiritual body. In the Resurrection, sinners will fall to the ground with the weight of their sins, while those who have been cleansed from the rust of sin will rise in proportion to their purity. They will enter the angelic realm of the heavens with the Lord and the angels.[550] "Abdisho" also says the following about the resurrection:

> "When the tenth level of human beings is completed, then that time is inevitable. The time will come and it is not a lie. On that day the sun will set and will not rise. The stars will fall from the sky and everything will be dark. All the elements will stop moving. Then the cross of light, the sign of the Son of God, will be seen in the sky with great power and splendor, amid the trumpets of the hidden angels,[551] and in the same way it will be visible as far as the west. Its majestic appearance will terrify everything in heaven and earth with its perfect name. He will call out with a resurrecting voice. "Let there be resurrection and renewal, this is the last trumpet call." With his resurrecting word, the wind of resurrection will blow, entering all around (the living beings), lifting their density, quickly, in the blink of an eye, transforming them into angels. The dead ascend to heaven intact and sound. They enter into the supreme (otakah) with their master. There they will enjoy theoretical (intellectual) blessings. ... This is true happiness. As for the wicked, they will remain on earth in pitch darkness and will not be able to move in it. They will burn in the fire of regret for their sins. They have exchanged eternal happiness for temporary and illusory pleasure and real wealth for the waste of the earth. This is a real hell. Its fire does not go out, its worms and worms do not die. Eternal happiness cannot be imagined in material terms such as eating, drinking, marrying. The Savior rebukes them with these words: "In the Hereafter, neither men will marry women nor women will marry men. But men will be like the angels of God in heaven."[552] Eating and drinking are necessary for the person not to perish, for the body to replace what it has consumed. As for marriage, it is necessary so that the lineage does not perish, so that a new person is born to replace the one who has died, until the appointed time in the eternal world of creation is completed. When these two causes disappear, namely extinction and death, the necessity of these two causes disappears. All bodily pleasures relieve one from the previous sorrows. Going to extremes in them returns pain to man. After the pangs of hunger and thirst, man feels flavor through eating and drinking. However, when he eats and drinks excessively out of gluttony and greed, if he can avoid death, he will suffer from illness and pain. Everything that is considered delicious in our world is like this. However, in relation to spiritual delicacies, they are not the same thing. For no matter how much man covets spiritual delicacies such as knowledge, wisdom and wisdom, he still craves for more."[553]

[549] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 133-135.
[550] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 135-137.

[551] Matthew, 24/29.
[552] Matthew, 22/30.
[553] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 29-30.

Suleiman of Basra explains how sinners suffer in Gehenna under the heading of the happiness that the righteous will attain and the nature of the torment that sinners will taste. Accordingly, if they suffer, they cannot be said to be numb, and if they do not suffer, then there is no torment for the sinners. If there is no torment for sinners in proportion to their sins, then there can be no happiness, which is a reward for the deeds of the righteous. The suffering of sinners in Gehenna will not be in the form of torment affecting the material body, but in the form of spiritual suffering affecting the human soul. Just as the righteous become angels and receive spiritual pleasure, the sinners will only receive spiritual torment. Because in the resurrection we will not be deprived of the faculty of feeling. According to him, the pleasure of happiness and the pain of torment will be felt through the power of reason. Therefore, sinners will feel the pain of torment in the same way that the righteous feel the pleasure of happiness. Intellect and intelligence will not be taken from man, but will be purified and purified to the highest degree. The blessings and burdens of the world to come cannot be compared with those of this world. Everyone will be rewarded and punished according to his deeds.[554]

Regarding the Day of Judgment (resurrection), Elia of Nusaybin focuses especially on the role of Christ's human nature. According to him, on the Day of Judgment, the Lord Christ will descend from the heaven from which He ascended to judge the living and the dead. God the Father will entrust the task of judging human beings on the day of judgment to Christ, His Son, His vicar and His caliph. This is because the substance of God cannot be seen by created beings. Since Christ's divinity cannot be seen, both the righteous and Satan and his followers will see Christ's humanity united with divinity in the form of one Christ and one Son. Satan and his followers will feel great pain and fear as they see the humanity of Christ taken from the substance of Adam and Mary. Because the fear of avenging Adam's death and the realization that they have lost their power over mankind will put them in a state of deep

despair, and this will cause them

[554] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 137-139; Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 30.

He will give them great torment. According to Elia, "He judges the dead and the living" means those who are in the grave and those who reach the Day of Judgment alive. According to him, by the dead are meant sinners and by the living are meant the good and the righteous. For the wicked who persecute the glory of Christ are dead, even if they live.[555] The dead will first be resurrected from their graves and then they will be judged with the living on the Day of Judgment (yawm al-qiyamah). The resurrection will be with the body. Since Christ was the first of those whose body was raised from the dead and the first of those who entered the heavenly angelic realm with a human body, the resurrection of the dead will also be with the body. In His own flesh, the Lord Christ showed the first example of what He had promised to mankind. Elia establishes a close connection between the human nature of Christ and the bodily resurrection based on soteriology. According to him, the point on which the church fathers agree is the realization of the bond that leads to the knowledge of truth (sonship), the resurrection of the bodies and the blessings prepared for the good believers who pass on to eternal life and the eternal punishment of the wicked. Hell is eternal just as Paradise is eternal. Each of the good people will be given a share of Paradise according to the amount of their deeds and what they deserve. Each of the bad people will be tormented according to the amount of their bad deeds. The people of Paradise are not equal in their deeds and efforts, nor are their degrees (in Paradise) the same. The people of torment will not be equal in their sins, nor will their degrees (in Hell) be the same.[556]

The Eastern Church does not have a formal doctrine of purgatory as the Roman Catholic Church believes.[557] Suleiman of Basra discusses whether sinners and demons will be shown mercy after being tormented, tormented and punished in Gehenna, and if so, when, and whether hell is eternal. According to him, some church fathers make people despair, while others make people hope. Regarding this issue

[555] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 132-136.

[556] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 142-144.
[557] Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul", 13.

He quotes the views of some church fathers. He quotes Isaac of Nineveh as saying:

> "Those who are punished (scourged) in hell (Gehenna) will be tormented with the lashes (stripes) of love; those who feel that they have sinned against love will suffer a harder and more severe pain from love than from fear". "The recompense for sinners will be this. The resurrection itself will be their reward instead of the punishment of justice, and in the end God will adorn those bodies that have trampled on his commandments with the splendor of perfection. This act of grace towards us after we have sinned is greater than the creation of our nature when we were not." "In the world to come, grace will be the judge, not justice."[558]

He quotes Theodore of Mopsuestia as saying the following on the subject:

> "Those who choose good things here will enjoy the pleasure of good things with praise in the world to come. Only when the wicked, who all their lives have been inclined to evil things, through the punishment they have received and the fear that arises from it, have acknowledged the truth, have chosen good things and have learned how much they have sinned by persevering in evil, and through these have become conscious of the supreme doctrine of the fear of God and have grasped to keep it in good faith, will they be considered worthy of the happiness of divine grace. If it were not possible for us to be saved from our sins through penance, we would never He would not have said, "(I tell you the truth) until you pay the last penny (of your debt), (you will not get out)."[559] If the punishments according to sins were not ultimately final, he would not have said, "He will be beaten with many stripes"[560] nor "He will be beaten with a few stripes."[561]

He quotes Diodore of Tarsus as saying:

> "A lasting reward, worthy of the justice of the Merciful, is stored up for the righteous for the reward of their labor, and torment for the sinners. But it is not eternal. The immortality prepared for them may not be worthless. However, they will have to be tormented for a short time because they are deserving of it in proportion to the measure of their crimes and misdeeds, according to the amount of their misdeeds. But immortal and eternal happiness is prepared for them". "God gives the reward of the reward beyond the proportion of the labor (deeds). In His abundant mercy He mitigates and reduces the punishment of those who will be tormented, and in His mercy He shortens the duration of time."[562]

Solomon of Basra agrees with Diodore of Tarsus and thinks that the torments of hell are not eternal. John 13/8[563] and Isaiah 13/20[564]

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[558] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 139-140.
[559] Matthew, 5/26.
[560] Luke, 12/47-48.
[561] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 140
[562] Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 140-141.
[563] "Peter: You will never wash my feet! He said. Jesus: If I do not wash them, you will have no place with me."

"These will go to eternal torment, but the righteous to eternal life"[565] in the New Testament, he thinks that the expression "eternal torment" does not indicate certainty.[566] The Church Fathers are quoted as saying that God wants to save everyone and that His mercy surpasses His justice. There seems to have been widespread acceptance among the Church Fathers of the view that after death there is a process of purification. This reveals that there is an understanding of purgatory. Nevertheless, the generally accepted view in the Eastern Church is that punishment is eternal. Hell is eternal, just as heaven is eternal, and both are eternal.[567] However, the Eastern Church has not formulated a clear dogma about purgatory like the Catholics, nor has it adopted the Protestant dogma that once a person is saved, he is saved for all time. The Eastern Church leaves this matter in mystery.[568]

To summarize the above briefly, the Eastern Church views the afterlife in two main phases. The first phase consists of death, individual judgment, and the pre-experience of heaven or hell. This phase covers the period until the second coming of Christ and is experienced on an individual scale. The second stage consists of the second coming of the Messiah, the resurrection of the dead (yawmu kiyamah), the general judgment (yawmuddin), the end of the world, and the entrance into heavenly angelic realm or hell, which is experienced on a general scale. After this final stage, an eternal life in the heavenly angelic world or hell begins. It is not clear from what has been reported exactly at what stage purgatory or purification takes place.

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564 "No one will live there again, no one will live there for generations".
565 Matthew, 25/46.
566 Solomon of Basrah, *The Book of the Bee*, 141-142.
567 See Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 30; Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 142, 144.
568 Toma, "The Destiny of the Soul", 16.

PART THREE

WORSHIP AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Religions generally have theoretical aspects that must be believed in and practical aspects that must be practiced. The practical and practical aspects of religions are covered under the heading of worship. Liturgy (liturgie), which is used in Western languages for worship, is derived from the Greek word leitourgia, which means "public activity". In Christianity, this word is used to denote worship and rituals performed collectively. In Christianity, worship is performed individually and collectively in special places and at special times of the day, on certain days of the week and at various times of the year. During worship, the congregation serves for and on behalf of God in the church, which is considered to be the embodiment of God. In general, there are four types of worship in Christianity: daily, weekly and yearly, in addition to the sacraments.[1]

Since Christianity emerged as a Jewish religious movement, it did not initially have any beliefs and practices that differed from Judaism, except for the belief in Jesus Christ. The early Christians attached special importance to Sunday, the day they believed Jesus rose from the dead after his death on the cross, and celebrated every Sunday as the day of his resurrection. In this respect, apart from the simple bread and wine ceremony, they did not have their own worship practices and continued to practice Jewish worship in Jewish temples and synagogues. In the course of history, with the expulsion of Christians from Jewish synagogues and the increase in the number of Christians from non-Jewish nations, Jewish beliefs and practices began to decline among Christians.

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[1] Mehmet Aydın, "Mabed and Worship", DIA (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 1998), 17/348-349.

rituals. The Sunday gatherings of remembrance and thanksgiving formed the basis for all the worship that would emerge in the Christian church over time, and for all the commemorations and celebrations of Jesus throughout the year. By the IVth century, different liturgies had emerged in different churches for the Eucharist, which until then had been carried on in the style of the apostolic prayers. As Christianity became free in the Roman Empire, the liturgical calendar was organized and the number of commemorations and celebrations related to Jesus increased. From the early days of Christianity until the IVth century, there was no systematic form of daily worship. People prayed daily, either on their own or at home in the family. During these prayers, parts of the Old Testament and especially the Psalms were read. Later, passages from the Gospels and the Epistles of the Apostles were added. However, from the second half of the fourth century onwards, daily prayers were systematized and divided into different times of the day.[2] Apart from the Jewish form of worship, the forms of worship that were influential in the development of Christian religious worship, such as Egyptian monastic worship, church/cathedral worship and urban monastic worship, showed a great development during this period. While Egyptian monasteries had daily religious practices specific to the desert clergy, churches/cathedrals, unlike monasteries, became a place where all Christians could attend morning and evening prayers. Urban monasteries combined both forms of worship. St. Basil's monastery is an example of this. All the services currently practiced in the church follow the daily cycle of the urban monastic tradition, at least during some periods of the liturgical year.[3]

Worship and rituals according to the Eastern Church, as "Abdisho" points out, generally consisted of the preservation of Sunday (a day for prayer, Bible study, etc.).

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[2] Mehmet Katar, "The Formation of the Church Calendar in Christianity", 24-27; "Daily Worship Practices in Religions", *Journal of Religious Research*, 1/1 (Ankara, 1998), 71-74.
[3] Jincy, O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 2-3.

reading and reflection on God's design), the continuous celebration of festivals and commemorations interspersed throughout the year, daily prayers (sluta/prayer), fasting, mercy and almsgiving.[4] In this section, the Eastern Church's understanding of the church and church structure, clergy, sacraments, rituals and symbols of the church, liturgical books, the church calendar and festivals, daily prayers, fasting and pilgrimage will be discussed.

1. CHURCH STRUCTURE

In the Eastern Church tradition, the church is referred to by the three terms "kenistha", "qyama" and "edtha". Kenishtha refers to the congregation gathered for prayer, while qyama means the covenant congregation. The term "edtha", meaning feast and celebration, refers to the celebration of Christ-related events.[5] According to "Abdisho", the term "church" refers to the congregation and the celebration of festivals and symbolizes heavenly (celestial) actions. According to him, the same service to divine majesty in heaven, in the form of nine degrees and three orders, is performed on earth by the clergy in the church. All the works they perform refer to the term church. Christ does not call the Church the foundation and stones, but the congregation of those who believe in it. Haykla (nave) and beth kanke (sanctuary) are figuratively called the church. He explains this as "the whole city came out to meet Jesus" and "he entered the city", where "the city" refers to the inhabitants and the buildings of the city.[6] The Eastern Church adheres to the Nicene Creed's definitions of the church as "catholic, apostolic and holy". It is considered catholic because Jesus Christ accepted people of all nations into his communion. It is apostolic because Jesus Christ Himself is the cornerstone of this building. It is holy because all the members of the Church are sanctified by holy baptism and the Holy

[4] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 27-28
[5] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 34-35.
[6] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar,* 18.

Because the Spirit dwells in them, they are also holy.[7] According to Bishop Elia of Nusaybin, the phrase "And we believe in one, holy, apostolic and catholic (universal) Church" means a community of holy believers united in the faith received from the apostles. This is a truth that enables the faithful to be together (united). Its believers are called "the holy community of believers". According to him, the church and faith are defined together with the statement that the church is faith and belief. Since the faith is one, the church is one. Therefore, anyone who does not adhere to this creed is rejected by the church. This view of Elia seems to be a detailed presentation of the first canon of the Council of Constantinople.[8] In *The Messianic Teachings*, the only catechism of the Eastern Church, the true and only church is described as "our holy, ancient and catholic Eastern Church, which has never tried to corrupt, add to or change the teachings or beliefs of the scriptures; which has never participated in any false synod to break up this one body (the church); and which even now adheres strictly to the beliefs, teachings and sacraments which we have learned from the apostles, holy synods and righteous patriarchs." The Church has been called "the body of Christ", "the bride of Christ", "the house of God", "the pillar and foundation of truth", "the Angel of God" or "the Kingdom of Heaven".[9] Nestorians, who value the understanding of the church, organize a festival called "Qudash "Edtha", which means the consecration of the church, every year in November.[10]

The earliest church building of Eastern Christianity is a house-church structure found among the ruins of the ancient city of Dura-Europos near the Euphrates River and dated to the III century. This building, however, differs from the church plans described in the East Syriac liturgical tradition. It is a rectangular hall with a high platform at the eastern end called the "bema" on which the celebrant sits or stands. It is believed that this building was built before Constantine (324-337) on the Tigris-Euphrates

[7] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 88.
[8] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 69-70, 138, 140.

[9] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 89.
[10] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 90.

It is thought to reflect the architecture of the typical Christian house-church structure in the basin. The traditional church buildings of the Eastern Church consisted of various sections. They developed within the framework of the earthly life of Jesus Christ and the historical and redemptive acts associated with it.[11] Traditional church buildings up to the XIV century consisted of the following parts:

Beth Kanke (Qanke/Sanctuary): The holiest part of the church, located at the eastern end of the building. Separated from the main hall of the church by a curtain, it symbolizes heaven or heaven. In the center of the beth canopy, separating it into two parts, stood an olive oil lamp that burned day and night. The space between the lamp and the ceremonial door of the beth canopy was reserved for the deacons, who were not authorized to go further. There were niches in the north and south walls, called beth gazze, for the metal plates and chalices used in the Eucharist.[12]

Madbha (Altar/Altar): The madbha was mostly rectangular in shape. In some modern churches, there was a ledge with three rows of steps that was part of the altar. This represented the Hill of Golgotha. The altar was incorporated into the east wall. Altars made only of wood were called "dappa" (portable altar). On the altar were the Cross, the symbol of Jesus Christ, and the Gospel. According to tradition, the altar symbolized the tomb and resurrection of Christ, the veil over the mysteries symbolized the sarcophagus over the tomb, and the altar was the throne of God. Altars that were not consecrated with oil by the bishop or without oil by the archdeacon had a dappa or altar panel. The altar slab, made of certain types of wood and covered with animal skins, was rectangular in shape. It was consecrated by a bishop according to certain rules and kept in churches. Portable altars (dappa),

[11] William Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy with Especial Reference to the East Syrian Eucharistic Liturgy", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal*, (Accessed 13. 07. 2019), 13, 18.
[12] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 19.

They are thought to have originated during the persecution of Shapur II (309-379). On either side of the altar were "flabella" or "fans", which the deacons used at certain points during the liturgy to stir up the congregation. They are said to symbolize the two angels, Gabriel and Michael, who were present at the tomb of Jesus Christ.[13]

Beth Mada (Baptistery/Baptistery): The beth mada, located south of the beth kanken, was separated by a perforated wall. This section had a small door that opened onto the church floor and was closed with a curtain. In some churches, the baptistery also had an outer door leading to the churchyard. There was a stone baptismal font for infants and a baptismal font for adults, probably a larger one. The baptistery would also have contained an altar or cupboard, similar to those found in the beth dyaqon or bema, for the consecration of the baptismal oil used to anoint the whole body during the baptismal rite. On the altar of the baptistery a Cross and a Bible were to be placed during the baptismal ceremony.[14]

Beth Dyakon/Beth Gazza (Diaconicon/Sacred Objects and Dressing Room): Located to the north of the Beth Canaan, this section was separated from it by a perforated wall. It was called the "Deacons' Room" or "Beth Gazza" (Treasury Room). It had a small door that opened onto the church floor (haykla) and was closed by a curtain. The sacred bread and wine for the Eucharist were prepared here. The bishop often rested here during the Communion service, and the costumes and vessels for the annual celebrations and the preparation of the holy sacrifice were kept here.

According to "Abdisho" women were not allowed to enter the beth kankah, so the consecration of women deacons took place in the beth dyakon, in front of the door leading to the beth kankah.[15]

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[13] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 19.
[14] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 20.
[15] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 20.

Kestroma (Qestroma/The Place of the Priest and Choir/Chancel Steps): This was a high space between the beth kanke and the main court, marked by three steps. These three steps extended from the bottom of the beth kanke to the main court. The third step was extended as a platform for the lower clergy to use during the Eucharist. Being located between the beth kanke, symbolizing heaven, and the haykla (main court), symbolizing the earth, the qestroma was seen as a symbol of heaven.[16]

Haykla (Main Court/Nave): This is the main area in the church where the congregation is present. It symbolized the earth and was one step lower than the level of the kestroma. In addition to the congregation, it housed many sub-sections such as the skakona, bema and beth shade, as well as the materials used for liturgical services.[17]

Skakona (Sqaqona/Pathway): The pathway from kestroma to bema. This road represented the way from Jerusalem to heaven and from there to heaven.[18]

Bema: The most important distinguishing architectural feature of the churches of the Eastern Church is the bema. It was a horseshoe-shaped area in the center of the main stage or haykla, surrounded by a high fence, representing the earthly Jerusalem. Bemas, which occupied a very functional place in the church tradition, are not seen in churches after the XIVth century. In the fifteenth canon of the Synod of Mar Isaac (410), the deacon is required to proclaim the litany in the bema and the archdeacon to read the Gospel there. The main use of the bema was for the liturgy of the word during the Eucharist. It was here that the priests washed their hands before the credo. In the center of the bema was an altar called the "thrones" on which the cross and the Gospel were placed. This altar symbolized the place of Golgotha, where Adam's tomb was located. Likewise, in the bema there was the bishop's throne and to his left the archdeacon's pulpit. There were also Bible classes

[16] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 20.
[17] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 20.
[18] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 20.

was also read here. It was considered the place where the incarnation and divine graces of Jesus Christ were completed. For example, the transition from the beth kanka to the bema symbolized Christ's entry into Jerusalem; the return to the beth kanka with the cross and the Gospel symbolized Christ's ascension into heaven. When the bema was still in existence, the Eastern Church did not have a ceremonial entrance into the church for the Eucharist. The opening ceremony (the entrance rite) would begin with the clergy already in the beth kanke. In the entrance rite, one did not go from the chancel to the sanctuary, as in the Latin rite, but from the chancel to the bema in the center of the chancel. However, with the disappearance of the bema, this practice, which was a distinctive feature of the Eastern Church liturgy, was abandoned.[19]

Beth Sahde (Martyrdom/Martyrium): This section was where the martyrs of the church were buried. It was a structure extending along the wall on the north side of the chancel and parallel to the bema. It took the form of a small room with the entrance through a door opening from the center of the north wall. The remains of martyrs and saints were buried here, as well as the remains of the patron saint of the church or bishops.[20]

In the East Syriac tradition, the symbolic understanding of beth kanke as heaven, haykla as the earth, bema as the earthly Jerusalem, and skakona as a path to heaven, contributed significantly to the development of eucharistic theology. Traditional church architecture was enriched by the Christianization of Mesopotamian palace motifs and themes borrowed from the Old Testament temple. In Ktesiphon, for example, the triple structure of the dyaqon, beth kanke and beth mada on the east side of the cathedral, where the catholicos' pulpit is located, combined into a single piece, was modeled on the Sassanid palace in Sardinia.[21]

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[19] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 20-21, 23; Lucas Van Rompay, "Art and Architecture", *GEDSH*, 38.
[20] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 21.

[21] For the shape of the church building and its parts, see Christoph Baumer, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 19,
Keniset al-Mashrik, 142-145.

Figure 1: Church Building and Sections of the Eastern Church

1. Main Entrance
2. Church Courtyard
3. Well
4. Prayer Rooms
5. Beth Mada (Baptistery)
6. Baptistery Outer Door
7. Male Entrance Door
8. Woman Entrance Gate
9. Baptistery Inner Door
10. Baptismal Altar-Cabinet
11. Baptismal Font
12. Window
13. Beth Kanke (Sanctuary)
14. Madbha (Altar/Altar)
15. Beth Gaza
16. Beth Dyakon /Beth Gazza
17. Holy Oil and Malka
18. Ceremonial Gate (Tara d-Kanke)
19. Side Door
20. Kestroma
21. Skakona
22. Bema
23. Thrones/Golgota Altar
24. The Place of the Bishop and Archdeacon
25. Beth Sahde (Martyrdom)
26. Sacred Relics
27. Male Congregation
28. Women Congregation

Another important issue regarding churches in the Eastern Church tradition is the presence or absence of paintings or icons. Some scholars claim that paintings were never used in Nestorian churches and that only a crucifix was kept as an object of veneration. According to these scholars, for the Nestorians, the statues of the crucified Christ or the statues of Christ crucified in accordance with the commandment given to Moses [1]

[1] Exodus, 20/4-5.

It was not considered appropriate to have pictures of them.[2] Today, Nestorian churches in the Middle East and India do not use paintings and statues. Accordingly, they differ from the Roman Catholic Church in the absence of paintings and statues and from the Greek Orthodox Church in the absence of icons.[3] Instead of a statue of Christ crucified, a simple cross is used. Paintings kept in churches for decoration are taken out during the service.[4] The absence of paintings and icons in Nestorian churches attracted the attention of western missionaries who were active among the Nestorians in Hakkari and Urmia in the nineteenth century. Therefore, this church was seen as the Protestants of the V. century, especially by Protestant missionaries.[5] However, despite the absence of paintings and icons in Nestorian churches today, there is ample evidence from various texts on theology and history written within the Eastern Church that paintings were present and icons were venerated as far back as the fourteenth century.[6] To give an example, Catholicos Elia II (1111- 1131) states that icons in churches were like writing and books. According to him, those who could not read or write could learn their religion by looking at the icons, which reflected what was explained in the book. He likens the reverence shown to images and icons to the reverence Muslims show to the Mushaf. He also compares the Muslim veneration of Hajar al-Aswad to the Christian veneration of the cross. From these statements, it is understood that icons were used in the Eastern Church.[7] However, i t should be emphasized that the cult of images and icons in the Eastern Church tradition was not as strong as it was in the Byzantine churches. This

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[2] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 112.
[3] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 121.
[4] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 114-115.
[5] Tawer Andrious, "Historical Evidences of the Existence of the Images in the Church of the East", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal*, (Accessed 18. 07. 2019), 3; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 121.
[6] Andrious, "Historical Evidences", 3. For an extensive list of works that provide information on the existence of paintings and icons, see the same article, 4-14.
[7] Sako, *Hivârat Messiahiyya-Islâmiyya*, 85.

This was seen as related to the fact that they lived in an environment dominated by Islam. The disappearance of the use of paintings and icons after the XIVth century is generally seen as linked to the decline in the socio-political and cultural situation of the Church.[8]

2. CHURCH SECRETS (RAZE D'EDTHA)

The Latin word "sacramentum", which means sacred oath and covenant, is used as the equivalent of the Greek word "mysterion" (mystery, secret) in the New Testament. In Roman law, the term sacramentum refers to the sacred oath and covenant made by a soldier joining the Roman army, pledging allegiance to Caesar and the empire. The term was first used to refer to Christian rituals by Tertullian (160-225) to refer to the voluntary enlistment in Christ's army through baptism. For the words sacrament or mystery, the Eastern Church used the Pahlavi word "raza", which means secret, hidden. The term "Raza" is also found in earlier Hebrew texts and in the Dead Sea Qumran texts. This term was used to designate the mysteries (sacraments) in general and the Eucharist in particular.[9]

In the Synoptic Gospels, the term sacrament or mysterion refers to the "mysteries of the heavenly angelic realm" revealed by Jesus Christ in parables.[10] However, this term appears more often in Paul's writings. For Paul, the "mystery" is portrayed first and foremost as the revelation of God the Father's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ, who reveals the divine will to save all mankind, by whom all things are renewed, and in those who believe in him.

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[8] Andrious, "Historical Evidences", 1, 15.
[9] Sebastian P. Brock, *St. Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns on Paradise* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir "s Seminary Press, 1990), 42; Mar Awa Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church of the East", *Academia* (Accessed 12. 05. 2019), 1; William Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal*, (Accessed 5. 05. 2019), 1.
[10] Matthew, 13/11; Mark, 4/11; Luke, 8/10.

Jesus Christ, the living Christ.[11] The Christian sacraments are based mainly on religious rituals and practices from the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, within the framework of the divine plan of salvation (mdabbranutha), two main practices related to the Israelites come to the fore: Circumcision[12] and Passover.[13] Circumcision is seen as an act and symbol that distinguishes the Israelites from other pagan nations in accordance with God's covenant with the prophet Abraham. In the New Testament, the practice of baptism was substituted for circumcision, which was given to the Israelites;[14] with this practice, participation in the community of God was realized. Passover, which was a celebration commemorating the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt in the Old Testament and which revealed its sacramental character with two important elements such as lamb and unleavened bread, was later reinterpreted as a theological act and sacrament in Christianity. In early Christianity, this rite, which was organized to commemorate the last supper (Eucharist) of Jesus Christ with his apostles before his death, showed a significant development over time. The fact that each member of the Israelites was included in God's covenant with Abraham through circumcision and included in the plan of salvation through eating the flesh of the Passover lamb was reinterpreted according to the Christian perspective. Thus, just as circumcision and participation in the Passover meal enabled every Israelite to truly participate in the mysteries depicted in the "covenant" and "act of salvation", so in Christianity, through baptism, eucharist and many other religious practices, believers participate in the mysteries instituted by Christ and performed in the church.[15] However, although various religious practices are mentioned in Paul's letters and among early Christian writers, such as baptism, consecration by the laying on of hands, and the sharing of bread and wine, these are not sacraments as we understand them today.

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[11] 1 Corinthians, 2/7-10; Romans, 16/25-26; Colossians, 1/26-27; 4/3; Ephesians, 1/9-10; 3/3-12, 1 Timothy, 3/16.
[12] Exodus, 17/1-14, 24.
[13] Exodus, 12/11-30.

[14] Colossians, 2/11.
[15] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 6-11.

It should be emphasized that no corresponding name is used. Although the term sacrament was first used by Tertullian for religious rites such as eucharist and baptism, it later acquired a meaning with Augustine that included symbols and signs as well as secrets and mysteries. Thus, things such as the Lord's Prayer, the Nicene Creed, the sign of the cross, the baptismal font and water, and the oil used for anointing were accepted as sacraments because they are sacred signs that act on the senses and bring other thoughts to the human mind. In his usage, the sacrament, which encompasses many religious practices, behaviors and thoughts, is defined as "what is formed when the Divine Word comes to the object".[16] Thus, the acceptance of sacraments as "visible signs of invisible divine grace" has become widespread. According to this acceptance, the sacrament or sacrament is defined as the mystery of divine actions through which divine mercy and grace are sought or bestowed, or more precisely, as the outward signs and manifestations of God's inward grace. These divine mysteries are revealed through a series of sacraments and actions performed in the Church and bestowed on human beings through various material means.[17]

Instead of simply communicating the truth in discourse, Syriac writers expressed abstract truths in allegorical and poetic narratives illustrated with poetic imagery, as if to create an experience in the listener. The most prominent author in this regard is Mar Efrem. According to him, everything in nature and scripture symbolizes Christ and the various aspects of his manifestation in the flesh. Ephrem's sacramental understanding is at the center of his biblical interpretations. In his prose biblical commentaries, he distinguishes between the literal and the figurative, interpreting both literally and spiritually-spiritually. In the former, he looks at the "rhetorical" aspect of the text and refers to it as "suranaith". In the second, he points beyond the text to the ultimate mystery of Christ.

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[16] Muhammet Tarakçı, *Protestantism in the Sacraments* (Bursa: Emin Yayınları, 2012), 19-25.
[17] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 1-2.

spiritual meaning and calls it "rukhanaith". The word "raza" is translated by the English word symbol, but this is far from reflecting the true meaning of raza. The literal translation of the symbol should be "remza". Remza is used in Syriac literature to denote a thing or action that points to another reality, but it does not necessarily have a hidden meaning behind it. The Syriac term raza is different from the static meaning of the symbol used today. According to Ephrem's theological understanding, it would be more accurate to refer to them as mysteries (raza) rather than symbols. According to Ephrem, the entire cosmos is full of symbols and signs that point to a higher theological reality. But the symbol is more than what it evokes, it participates in the reality of what it symbolizes.[18] In this respect, Mar Efrem makes a certain distinction between the use of "type", "symbol" and "raza". Another important term that is helpful in understanding the sacraments is "tupsa" (Greek: tupos, English: type), which is often used by the Fathers of the Eastern Church to mean type, symbol, and reminder. It is an action or thing that draws attention to a reality that is older in origin and origin than itself. This technical term is very important in biblical interpretation. It is the analogous figures of theological truths in the Old Testament, called typologies in the New Testament. Typology is often used to explain the many references in the Old Testament to the coming and activities of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. But the Christological typology of the Old Testament does not only apply to the person of Christ, but is extended to the end times through the church, which is Christ's continuation on earth. For example, the Last Supper is the type and symbol for the Holy Sacrifice (Qurbana), the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan for the baptism of believers and the Tree of Life for the Holy Cross. However, the tupsa, unlike the symbol, is really the church

[18] Christopher Buck, *Paradise and Paradigm, Key Symbols in Persian Christianity and the Bahā ″ī Faith*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 68-69; Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church," 18.

may participate in the mystery (raza) that he or she demonstrates or depicts in his or her liturgy (sacramental celebrations).[19]

Theodore of Mopsuestia takes the premise of "two worlds" as a basis for sacramental theology. According to him, Moses built two tents, one which he called the "holy place" and one which he called the "holy of holies" as he had learned in the divine vision. The former represents the kind of life and place we now inhabit on earth, while the latter, called the "holy of holies," is a place beyond the visible heavens, resembling and representing the place from which the Lord (Christ) ascended, in which he dwells, and in which we will dwell with him. Theodore states that each sacrament consists of the representation by signs and symbols of things that are invisible and cannot be described in words. For him, such things require interpretation and explanation in order for the person approaching the sacrament to know its power. If it consisted only of the visible elements, words would be useless, since the vision itself could show us all the events that are taking place, one by one. But since a sacrament contains signs of things that are happening or have already happened, words are needed to explain the power of signs and mysteries.[20] Theodore of Mopsuestia defines the sacrament as the depiction by means of signs and symbols of things that are invisible and inexpressible. Symbols and signs express something that does not exist. A candle lit in church is a sign of personal commitment, but it is not commitment itself. A sacrament is a very special symbol or sign. It not only points to what is behind it, but also does what it symbolizes. In baptism, for example, the water symbolizes cleansing from sin and new life. But it also does what it symbolizes. The sacraments are already considered unique signs because they succeed in doing what they symbolize.

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[19] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 19.
[20] Alphonse Mingana (ed. and trans.), *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord "s Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*, Woodbrooke Studies 6 (Cambridge: W. Haffer and Sons, 1933), 17-18.

is recognized.[21] Therefore, the external elements of the sacrament, such as bread, wine, water, oil, etc., symbolize the hidden and inexpressible power that lies behind the sacrament. This hidden power ultimately derives from the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (the paschal mystery).[22] Theodore of Mopeustia sees the sacraments as the guarantee of eternal life and eternal blessedness in the future. For him, the performance of the sacraments in this world will enable us to participate in the reality of the world to come. In this world, one benefits from the sacramental rites and at the same time experiences a pre-experience of the world to come. Through the sacraments, the transition from mortal nature to immortality, from temptable nature to sinlessness, from mutability to immutability, from the evils of earth to heaven is achieved. According to him, we are commanded to realize the symbols and signs of the things of this world. Thus, through the use of the mysteries, we can become people who participate in the blessing and happiness of heaven.[23]

Narsay, like Theodore to a large extent, also operates through the concept of two worlds (the heavenly realm and the material/earthly realm) in relation to the sacraments. He sees the earthly administration (clergy) as a reflection of the sacraments celebrated in heaven. The priests in the earthly temple depict the heavenly life with the help of a mystery and show a mirror of what happens in the future. According to him, the priest, by the power of the will of the Holy Spirit, will distribute the life in the bread, expel sin and make the Spirit dwell among the faithful. The power of the Spirit descends into mortal man, takes up residence in the bread and sanctifies it with his power. Concerning the signs and symbols of the sacrament (in the case of the sacrament of baptism), he states that the oil is the symbol that reveals divine power and gives assurance of God's secretly accomplished acts through the external material. It is not the material material of a particular sacrament that sanctifies man, but

[21] Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", 2-3.
[22] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 20.

[23] Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed*, 20; Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 21.

It is the power of the Spirit hidden within it. According to him, in baptism it is the power of the baptismal oil, not the oil alone. But it is the Spirit who gives it this power.[24]

The Eastern Church adopts the Antiochian school's understanding of the role of the sacraments in salvation. It assigns to the sacraments a role as the means of distributing God's grace to the baptized believer and as guarantees leading to the heavenly kingdom. Accordingly, their full benefit will be realized mainly at the end of time and in the afterlife. While in this world, through these mysteries, one qualifies for the awe-inspiring glory of the world to come. In order to attain this, however, one must live as heavenly a life as possible. This is why the sacraments are so important in the Christian life. They are believed to have been instituted by Christ to preserve and strengthen the Christian faith. In a prayer in Hudra, it is described as "the medicine of life" and it is stated that this medicine is given in the church.[25] The Syriac Fathers see the church as a true model of the heavenly church and the place where Christ's grace and mercy are realized. Because Jesus gave to the church all the graces and truths that he obtained through his death and resurrection. The earthly Church is itself a great sacrament. It is a living and active continuation on earth of Christ, its founder. It accomplishes its great mission through its human representatives (clergy). Like Christ its founder, they administer the sacraments of the grace of God and the realization of salvation through the ordinary realities of human life: bread, wine, water, oil, word and various actions.[26]

The basic principle of the sacramental theology of Eastern theologians, especially that of Theodore, is the contemplation of the sacraments (mysteries) through signs and symbols. The emphasis is on what the mysteries represent and symbolize, whereas Latin sacramental theology is primarily concerned with cause and effect, "wherein

[24] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 22.
[25] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 9.
[26] Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", 3.

and tends to focus on "what is now being realized and why".[27] For the Greek-speaking Eastern and Eastern Orthodox Churches, the theological basis for the sacraments is generally based on the incarnation. For the Eastern Church, however, the theological basis of the sacraments is not based on the mystery of the incarnation, but mainly on the mystery of Christ's resurrection. For the Eastern Church, the mystery of the incarnation is the beginning of the divine plan and design (mdabbranutha). But its fulfillment lies in the mystery of the resurrection. In the resurrection of Christ, his material body was transformed into the supreme body (also known as the body of the resurrection). This is the body promised by the previous human being, Christ, the "firstborn" among the dead, which will be obtained from death in the general resurrection. In the resurrection, man's material, mortal, inky body is transformed and glorified into an exalted spiritual body. The ordinary human body is glorified into spiritual splendor. According to the Eastern Church, the body of Christ that the apostles saw after the resurrection was the body glorified by the resurrection. Divinity was humanized in the mystery of the incarnation, and so only "redeemability" was proclaimed. But in the mystery of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, humanity was elevated to the highest rank when Christ ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father. The pure material body is glorified and transformed by Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead.[28]

For a long time there was no consensus among Christians as to what constituted a sacrament or the number of sacraments. There were different opinions on this subject among the writers of the Eastern Church. Although John Bar Zo'bi, who lived in the early thirteenth century, mentions twelve sacraments, "Abdisho" bar Brikha (d. 1318) and Catholicos Timotheos II (1318-1332) give two different lists of seven sacraments. Between the XIIth and XIIIth centuries, the number of sacraments in the Catholic Church in Europe ranged between seven and

[27] Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", 8.
[28] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Churcht", 5-6.

[29] The developments regarding the limitation of the sacraments also began to affect Eastern Christians and official views on the definition and number of sacraments began to be formed in the East. In fact, the early Eastern Fathers did not specify any number of sacraments and the number of sacraments was quite broad. The term sacrament (raza) was used in a secondary sense for the ritual and liturgical acts of the Church aimed at sanctifying the faithful. "Abdisho" was the first in the Eastern Church to limit the number of sacraments to seven as an official opinion. Prior to this, there was no official opinion on the definition and limitation of the sacraments in the Eastern Church.[30] According to "Abdisho", the seven church sacraments (mysteries) mentioned in the scriptures are listed as follows: 1. Confirmation (priesthood) 2. Holy baptism 3. Holy oil 4. The sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ. 5. Repentance. 6. the holy leaven called the Malka.7. the Sign of the life-giving cross.[31] According to Timotheos II, Catholicos of the Eastern Church, the order of the sacraments is as follows: 1. Priesthood 2. Consecration of the Church 3. Baptism 4. Eucharist 5 Mystery of ordination of priests or monks (shumlaya) 6. Funeral 7. Marriage.[32] Timotheus divides the sacraments into two categories. The first are the essential sacraments, such as the priesthood, the consecration of the altar, baptism and the Eucharist, which have the prayer of invocation (epilexis) of the Holy Spirit. The second category is the secondary sacraments, such as ordination of monks, funerals, and marriages, which do not have the epilexis prayer. Also

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[29] In the Roman Church, the seven sacraments were first officially recognized at the Second Council of Lyon in 1274 and later reaffirmed at the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. The Eastern Orthodox Church accepted the number seven in the seventeenth century. See Anthony M. Coniaris, *These Are the Sacraments: The Life-Giving Mysteries of the Orthodox Church* (Minneapolis: Light and life Publishing Company, 1981), 9.

[30] William Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", 5.

[31] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19.

[32] Brock, "Timotheos II," *GEDSH*, 415. Timotheos II's seven-book work "The Mysteries of the Church" is still in manuscript form and has no complete translation. For studies on him, see P. B Kadicheeni (ed. & ET), *The Mystery of Baptism: Nestorian Patriarch (1318-1332)* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1980); Jose Matthew Kochuparampil (ed. & ET), *The Mystery of the Eucharist. Syriac critical text, translation and studies of the chapter "On the Mysteries of the Body and the Blood" from "The Causes of the Seven Mysteries of the Church" by Patriarch Timothy II (1318-1332)*, (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Excerpta e Dissertatione, 2000); William Toma, *The Mystery of the Church. Syriac Critical*

Edition and Translation of the Rite of the Consecration of the Altar with Oil and the Chapter "On the Consecration of the Church" from the Book of the Seven Causes of the Mysteries of the Church by Patriarch Timothy II (1318-1332), (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Excerpta e Dissertatione, 2007).

He also distinguishes between sacraments based on apostolic commands (written sources) and those based on church canons (handed down by tradition).[33] Three reasons are given for limiting the number of sacraments to seven in the Eastern Church: First, the work of Bar Habreus (d. 1286), the Mafirian of Tikrit of the West Syriacs; second, the decisions of the Council of Lyon II (1272-1274) reaching the Nestorian Church through Dominican missionaries; and third, the visit to Europe by Rabban Savma (1220-1294), the envoy of Catholicos Yahballaha III (1281-1317).[34] Five of the sacraments in Mar 'Abdisho's list of church sacraments are compatible with the sacraments of both the Eastern and Western churches. However, instead of the sacraments of anointing of the sick and the sacraments of marriage, the sacraments of holy leaven (malka) and the sign of the cross were accepted. The former is not known to any other church, while the latter is recognized in the Roman Catholic Church. According to "Abdisho", the churches that did not have the sacrament of the holy malka recognized marriage as the seventh sacrament.[35] Anointing of the sick, although not considered a sacrament, is considered much more sacred than the sacrament of holy leaven (malka). According to the Eastern Church, if the sacrament of marriage is to be recognized as a sacrament, then the sacrament of burial must also be recognized as a sacrament. However, the Eastern Church is not in favor of giving more sacraments to the marriage ceremony.[36] According to "Abdişo", the most important of the sacraments is the sacrament of ordination.[37] Badger, who studied among the Nestorians of Hakkari and Urmia in the nineteenth century, states that Nestorians attach importance to the sacraments of sacrifice (eucharist) and baptism, but not so much to the others.[38] Despite "Abdisho's" detailed account of the sacraments, today the catechism of this church does not include the number of sacraments.

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[33] Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", 7.
[34] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 11-13.
[35] Mar "Abdisho" es-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 13-14.
[36] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 14-15

[37] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19.
[38] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/150.

does not. This can be attributed either to the fact that the number of sacraments is considered insignificant or to the fact that there is uncertainty as to whether the number of sacraments is two or seven. For example, in this work, the priesthood is discussed in the chapter "About the Holy Church" and it is not stated whether it is a sacrament or not. As a matter of fact, many people in the Eastern Church do not know the names of the sacraments. Therefore, only the sacraments of sacrifice and baptism are considered very important in the Eastern Church, when in reality there are seven sacraments.[39] However, the Eastern Church, at a synod in 2001

He officially accepted "Abdisho's" list of sacraments.[40]

Another important issue concerning the sacraments of the Church concerns the conditions that the sacraments must have in order to be valid and effective. According to "Abdisho", if someone other than the faithful were to ask a question about what constitutes the sacramentality and mystery of each of the seven sacraments, the answer would be that all the sacraments are sanctified by three things. The first is a true priest who has properly obtained the priesthood in accordance with the conditions and qualifications required by the Church. The second is that the sacraments are instituted by every word and commandment ordained by the Lord. The third is that those who receive the sacraments believe, with the right intention and a confirmed faith, that the effect of the sacraments is brought about by a heavenly power.[41] Therefore, the validity of each of the seven mysteries (sacraments) is based on three basic elements: source, mediators and recipients. Considering these criteria, the first article states that those who have been properly ordained by the Church are authorized to administer the sacraments.

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[39] For the only catechism of the Eastern Church, see *Messianic Teachings of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East (Yuipana M'shikhaya d'Eta qaddishta washlikhayta o'qathuliqi d'mathnkha)*, translated from Malayalam by M. P. Francis, Ernakulam, (Kerala: Mar Themotheus Memorial Printing and Publishing House, 1962). This work was also translated into English by Patriarch Mar Eshai Shem "on XXIII (1909-1975) in 1955. See https://marshimun.com/new/pdfs/Yulapana%20part%20I.pdf.

[40] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 11, footnote 7.

[41] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19-20.

This is why, according to "Abdisho", the sacrament is placed in the first place as the most important sacrament. Because without the sacrament, the other sacraments cannot be realized. The second article states that the foundation of the sacrament is the word of command and commandment of Jesus Christ, the incarnate word of God the Father. Through his commandment, the sacraments are built up and effected by the activity of the Holy Spirit. Christ is therefore the founder of the sacraments. The third point reveals that the purpose of the sacraments is to elevate the baptized believers morally, to strengthen their faith and to bless them with God's grace. Therefore, in order to benefit from the sacraments, one must have faith in them. From this last point it is clear that for "Abdisho" the sacraments are a "subjective" participation in the mysteries of Christ.[42] According to Catholicos Timotheos II, for the sacraments to be valid, they must have been instituted by Christ, the presence of the Holy Spirit and the effective sanctification of the material used in the sacrament, and the presence of a validly ordained priest. For him, there is nothing that happens by chance or simply happens in the holy Church. Not only are there special sacraments such as the priesthood, baptism, and Eucharist, which were instituted by Christ himself, but the materials for the sacraments (bread and wine for Eucharist, oil and water for baptism) were determined by the apostles. Whether or not the bread for the Eucharist should be leavened or the wine mixed was determined by the canons established by the church fathers under the influence of the Holy Spirit.[43] "The question remains unanswered as to whether the sacraments administered by a validly consecrated and ordained priest are valid if he has fallen into sin. However, according to a Nestorian source cited by Badger, in this case, even if the priest is a liar and a sinner

[42] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 13-14; Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", 4.
[43] Toma, "Sacramental Theology in the East-Syriac Tradition", 4.

his sacrifice is accepted through the Holy Spirit. For the people are not wronged by the sins of the priest, and his sins do not withhold the mercy of God from the people of God. If the priest is a sinner, his sins are his own. And his righteousness benefits only himself.[44]

According to the tradition of the Eastern Church, each sacrament has two basic aspects: substance and form. "Abdisho" uses the terms "mlo "aa" (matter) for the external aspect of the sacrament, consisting of its material elements, and "adhsa" (form) for the spiritual grace of the Holy Spirit expressed in the formula specific to the sacraments. This understanding is based on Aristotle's holomorphic (matter-form theory).[45] According to "Abdisho", the sacraments are necessary because of man's needs in this material world. For man to exist in the world, he must be born of a physical mother through a physical father, although his form and perfection are given by God. Likewise, although the image of reason and perfection is endowed by the Holy Spirit and the supreme power, he must be born in the spiritual womb of baptism through a spiritual father, the priest, in order to belong to the eternal realm. In other words, just as it is necessary for a person who comes into this material world to be nourished with material food and drink in order to sustain his temporal life, the body and blood of Christ (the Eucharist), which is spiritual food and divine drink, is essential for a baptized person to establish his eternal life in God. According to him, the human body is subject to disease and suffering due to the passage of time and bad conditions. It needs doctors to restore it to its former health, provided it follows their instructions. In the same way, a faithful Christian who falls into heresy, sin and immorality is healed by spiritual doctors, the clergy of the Church, provided he follows their instructions. According to him, holy oil is used in baptismal birth. Holy leaven is used in the spiritual food that is the body of Jesus Christ. The sign of the cross, which gives life.

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[44] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/162, 164; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the*

East, 11-13.
[45] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 14.

the perpetual guardian and the one who completes and perfects all the sacraments.[46] According to this approach, when a Christian is afflicted with a spiritual disease called sin, he or she can be healed only by appealing to the spiritual doctors who distribute their medicines, the sacraments, in the Church. The sacraments are intended to sanctify a Christian at various stages of earthly life, such as birth, death, etc. In these stages God's saving grace accompanies man and this sanctification continues until he is saved.

The sacraments are instituted or established in the Church in three ways. First, the sacraments instituted by Christ Himself and recorded in the scriptures: Eucharist, baptism, confirmation and absolution. Second, the sacraments instituted by the apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: Holy leaven (malka), apostolic oil (qarna). Thirdly, the sacraments instituted by the holy Church through her apostolic authority by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: The Holy Cross and the nine degrees of the priesthood. Based on this last category, Catholicos Timotheos II considers liturgical acts such as monastic shaving, marriage, the consecration of the altar, and funeral rites to be "sacramental" in nature. In this respect, the Eastern Church does not have the formal distinction of sacraments for rites and ceremonies that do not have the sacrament of the seventh (e.g. holy water, etc.) as in the Latin West, but somehow share their sacramental nature (aspect). The sacraments, instituted by Christ, transmitted by the apostles, and performed and developed in the holy Church, are acts related to the very nature and mission of the Church. The place of celebration of the sacraments is therefore the Church itself, and the sacraments are called "Raze d-"Edta" (mysteries of the Church).[47]

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[46] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19.
[47] Royel, "The Sacraments of the Assyrian Church", 15-16.

2.1. Clergy (Kahnuta)

The priestly consecration is considered the most important sacrament, ranking first in "Abdisho's" list of the sacraments of the Church. Without this sacrament, the other sacraments cannot be administered. Therefore, the first criterion for the validity of the sacraments is the priesthood obtained through the Church in accordance with its conditions. "Abdisho" defines the priesthood as a mediation service between God and man for the forgiveness of sins, the delivery of graces and the removal of wrath. According to him, the priesthood is divided into incomplete priesthood, that is, the priesthood of the Mosaic law, and complete priesthood, that is, the priesthood of the Church. The essence of the priesthood is based on Christ's words to Peter: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven",[48] , founded on the words, "Shepherd my lambs, shepherd my sheep"[49] and "Then he breathed on them, saying, Receive the Holy Spirit! Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven. Whose sins you do not forgive, they remain unforgiven."[50] "According to Abdisho, the previous (Old Testament) priesthood was based on a certain lineage rather than on lifestyle and will. However, the new priesthood (in the New Testament) is based on the apostolic succession and is realized by the Church's bestowal (consecration) of the hands of those deemed worthy after the evaluation of the lifestyle and thoughts of the candidates for priesthood in accordance with the saying "Test them first; if they are found to be without fault, let them be ordained"[51] . According to him, for this reason, the perfection of the new priesthood and the imperfection of the old priesthood are self-evident. For many wicked sons, such as Cain, Ham, the sons of Lot, the sons of Moses, Eli, and others, were descended from righteous fathers, and Melchizedek, Abraham, etc.

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[48] Matthew, 16/19.
[49] John, 21/15-17.
[50] John, 20/22-23.
[51] 1 Timothy, 3/10.

It is also known that righteous sons are descended from wicked fathers. "Abdisho" goes on to explain the difference between Jewish priesthood and Christian priesthood, s t a t i n g that the former was bestowed with material oil, whereas the latter is realized with spiritual oil and the laying on of hands (c o n s e c r a t i o n).

"Abdisho" takes Paul's words as decisive for the rules that test the worthiness of a candidate for the priesthood. According to this:

> "If a man desires to become a priest, he desires a good vocation. But the priest must be a man without reproach, a monogamist, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, and capable of teaching. He must not be a winebibber or a tyrant; he must be meek, free from quarrels and love of money. He should rule his house well, make his children obedient and respectful in every way. He who does not know how to manage his own home, how can he take care of the people of God? He must not be a new believer. Otherwise he may become proud and face the same judgment as Satan. He must be recognized by those outside the community as a good man. So that he does not become a reproach and fall into Satan's trap. In the same way, church officials must be men of dignity, not men of loose conscience, lovers of wine, seekers of ill-gotten gains. They must embrace the mystery of faith with a clear conscience. Let them be tried first, and if they are not reprehensible, let them serve."[52]

According to the tradition of the Eastern Church, the clergy are organized into nine levels in three orders. Each of these levels symbolizes the actions of the heavenly (celestial) angels. It is possible to list these levels as follows:

First Order: This order is the episcopate and consists of the patriarch, metropolitan and bishop.

a. **Catholicos, Patriarch (Catholicos/Patriacha): The** highest rank in the Church.

   It corresponds to the Cherubim (Cherubim/Chrowi) angels in heaven. In the Eastern Church, the term catholicos was first used (Synod 410), but later the term patriarch (Synod 552) was also used. The Catholicos is elected from among the metropolitans and must be consecrated by the metropolitans of the six dioceses defined by the canons of the Church.

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[52] 1 Timothy, 3/1-10. Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 20.

b. **Metropolitan (Metrapolitha/Matran/ Archbishop):** The highest authority in the diocese. He is equivalent to the angels Seraphim (Seraphim/Zraphae) in heaven. He is the highest ranking cleric in the diocese. For the consecration and appointment of metropolitans elected from among the bishops, there must be at least three bishops, one of whom must be a catholicos.

c. **Bishop (Apiscopa/Abona):** Corresponds to the angels of heaven (Thronesin/Mothuae/Kurasi). The office of bishop, obtained after the offices of deacon and priest, signifies full priesthood. A person with this title has the right to teach and administer all the sacraments. He is responsible for the administration of the parish in his diocese and ordains deacons and priests. At least three bishops must be present for the consecration and appointment of a bishop. This appointment must be made in the presence of the metropolitan or on his behalf. At the consecration of a bishop, the Bible is placed on the bishop's name and the consecrators lay their right hands on it. Once the consecration and appointment of a bishop has been approved by the Catholicos, episcopal authority can be exercised. One of the most important functions of the bishop is the consecration of the church or altar.

Second Order: This is the priesthood and consists of the deacon, the piryadotha and the priest.

a. **Archdeacon (Archidiacon/Chaplain):** Corresponds to the Dominion (Hyli) angels who represent power. He is the right hand of the bishop and directs all the services in the church. Every bishop must have an archdeacon. He has the authority to consecrate the altar without oil.

b. **Bishop/Periodeute (Cor-episcopa/Sa "ora/Piryadotha):** Corresponds to the angels representing the Sultan (Ulthani). He is a priest who visits churches and monasteries as a representative of the bishop.

c. **Priest (Qashisha):** Corresponds to the angels representing sovereignty (Maravatha). His main task is to teach the congregation their religion. His main duty in rituals is to offer sacrifices and bless the baptismal water and oil. In addition to these, he also reads the Bible on the platform, conducts the marriage ceremony, buries the dead, forgives sinners, etc., and performs all the duties of the priesthood except the blessing of the altar with oil.

Third Order: This order is the diaconate and consists of a deacon, an assistant deacon and a preacher (reader) deacon. The term shammas for deacon is Syriac for one who serves. They assist the bishop and priests during the liturgy.

a. **Deacon (Shammas):** Corresponds to the guardian angels representing the Riaseti. During the liturgy he reads the letters of the Apostles and the litany. He offers the chalice to the congregation during communion. He has no authority to baptize. However, in cases of necessity, when there is no priest present, he can perform this task. However, he does not have the power to invoke the Holy Spirit upon oil and water. A Mass cannot be celebrated without a deacon or a second priest.

b. **Assistant (Second) Deacon (Heevpadyakna/Sub-Deacon):** They represent the group known as the Archangels (Rabbai Malachi). They are responsible for reading the Old Testament, lighting the lights, carrying candles, checking the doors to prevent non-Christians or animals from entering the church, and maintaining order and peace in the church. They are not authorized to enter the sanctuary or touch the sacred vessels.

c. **Reader Deacon (Karoya):** At the bottom of the hierarchy, the karoya rank corresponds to the group of angels (malachi) closest to humans. He reads scripture passages aloud during the liturgy. Beth

He stands in the area called the qestroma in front of the qanki and is not allowed to enter the beth qanki in any way. He can only read Old Testament books and cannot participate in the Eucharist.[53]

According to the tradition of the Eastern Church, Jesus Christ performed all of these tasks. In Nazareth, when he read Isaiah 61:1-2 in the synagogue, he fulfilled the office of karoya;[54] he fulfilled the office of heevpadyakna (assistant deacon) when he drove out the vendors in the temple courtyard;[55] he fulfilled the office of shamasha (deacon) when he proclaimed the beginning of the heavenly kingdom and called for repentance;[56] when he was baptized, [57][58] when he distributed the bread and wine at the Passover meal to his disciples,[59] when he laid his hands on the woman who had been sick for eighteen years and healed her, when he said, "I must preach the news of the kingdom of God in other cities,"[60] or when he said to his disciples, "Do not go among the Gentiles and into the cities of the Samaritans. Instead, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."[61] The office of piryadotha (bishop) when he said,[62] The office of archdeacon when he asked them to preach the Gospel, Christ appeared to his disciples after the resurrection and said, "Then he breathed on them, saying, Receive the Holy Spirit! Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven. Whose sins you do not forgive, they remain unforgiven."[63] The bishop's mission, "Jesus took his disciples outside the city, near Bethany. He raised his hands to heaven and blessed them. As he blessed them

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[53] Tawer Andrious, "The Priesthood and its Ranks in the East Syriac Tradition", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal*, (Accessed 18. 07. 2019), 18-31; Mar "Abdişo" es-Sobavi, *al-Jawhar*, 20; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 31; Albayrak, *Chaldeans and Nestorians*, 217-222.
[54] Matthew, 4/16.
[55] John, 2/12-17.
[56] Matthew, 4/17.
[57] John, 3/22-23.
[58] Matthew, 26/26-28.
[59] Luke, 13/11-13.
[60] Luke, 4/43-44; Matthew, 9/33; Mark, 6/6.
[61] Matthew, 5/6; Mark, 6/7; Luke, 9/1-2.

[62] Matthew, 10/5-13; Mark, 6/8-10; Luke, 9/3-4.
[63] John, 20/22-23.

He departed from them, and was taken up into heaven"[64] when he gave Peter the office of metropolitan and the keys of the heavenly kingdom[65] when he exercised the office of patriarch.[66]

For clergy in the bishop category, there is a ban on meat consumption and marriage. Catholicos of the Eastern Church were generally elected from among monastic monks. Because of the prohibition of meat-eating in the monastic tradition, this practice influenced the episcopal tradition, which was nourished by it, and thus it became a tradition for bishops, metropolitans and catholicos not to consume meat.[67] While marriage was permitted for those in the second and third levels of the hierarchy, it was forbidden for clergy in the first level. Only in the Vth and VIth centuries this rule was violated and bishops, archbishops and catholicos were allowed to marry. The Council of Beth Lapat, organized by Barsauma, the bishop of Nusaybin, in 484, first authorized marriage for monks and priests who could not control themselves in sexual matters.[68] In 486, this was repeated at the Council of Seleucia. Accordingly, from now on, no clergyman would be forced to give up marriage in the church where he served, and candidates for the priesthood would not be forced into celibacy. The office of deacon would only be given to those who were married, and priests whose wives had died would be allowed to have a second marriage if necessary.[69] As a matter of fact, Babay, who was married and had children, was elected as Catholicos during this period.[70] At the synod held during his reign in 497, it was recommended that those from the catholicos, the highest spiritual authority of the clerical hierarchy, to the lowest ranking clergy should legally marry a single wife, and those whose wives died were allowed to marry a second time.[71] For half a century until the reign of Mar Aba (540-552), who was celibate, the catholicos were married.

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[64] Luke, 24/50.
[65] Matthew, 16/19.
[66] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 31-33.
[67] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 107.
[68] *Synodicon Orientale,* 526, 531-532; Mari b. Sulayman, *Ahbāru Betārike*, 41-42; Shar, *Siirt*

Vakayinamesi, 137-139.
[69] *Synodicon Orientale*, 302-305; Şer, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 156-157.
[70] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 162.
[71] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 162.

Mar Aba did not approve of the marriage of catholicos and bishops and forbade it.[72] Furthermore, according to the Synod of Mar Dadisho (424), the catholicos cannot be judged by those under his rule or by his peer patriarchs. The Catholicos has the right to judge all those under his rule. However, the judgment on the patriarch is left to Christ.[73]

2.2. Baptism (Ma "mudita)

Baptism is one of the important sacraments of the church, believed to have been instituted by Jesus Christ and to signify initiation into church membership. Through this sacrament, the believer in Christ joins the community and becomes a member of the body of Christ (the church). The East Syriac tradition uses the word "ma "mudita" for baptism and "amude" for the baptized. In the early literature this term has a vague meaning. It was used to refer to the source of baptismal water as well as to the baptismal rite as a whole. For example, when Afrahat says, "We receive the spirit of Christ from the ma "mudita," it is not entirely clear whether he is referring to the water or to the baptismal rite as a whole.[74] "Abdisho" defines baptism as immersion and washing with water and divides it into five parts. The first is to remove the dirt from the body with water, as is commonly done by all people. The second is washing, which, according to the practice of the Law, is believed to cleanse the whole body of dirt and impurity and purify it before God.[75] The third is washing according to the custom of the ancestors, such as washing "bowls, jugs, copper pots, beds" and "not eating food from the market without washing it".[76] The fourth is John's baptism, which invites only repentance and forgiveness of sins.[77] The fifth is the baptism of John, who gives the Holy Spirit

[72] Sher, *Siirt Vakayinamesi*, 185; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 104.
[73] *Synodicon Orientale,* 296-297.
[74] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 38.
[75] Deuteronomy, 23/11, Leviticus, 15/5, 17/15-16.
[76] Mark, 7/3-5-8.
[77] Matthew, 3/5-12; John, 3/23; Acts, 19/4.

(It is the baptism of Jesus Christ, the Savior, who gave the gift of sonship, resurrection from the dead and eternal life.[78] According to him, this is circumcision without the use of the hands and the cutting away of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. The circumcision of the flesh was given as a symbol of the blood lineage of the Israelites (Jacobites). Christ's baptism, on the other hand, was given as a symbol of spiritual kinship to the people of the New Israel (Jacob) who were called to be the sons of God. According to him, he gave those who accepted him (baptism) the power to become sons of God.[79] "Abdisho" refers to pure water as the substance of baptism. For "unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."[80] The mode of baptism, according to the words of the Savior, is "baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."[81] "Abdisho" is a picture of Jesus Christ saying, "I have a great affliction to bear. I liken it to a baptism of affliction. How I am afflicted until this baptism takes place."[82] There is a sixth baptism, which is blood, and a seventh baptism, which is tears, as it is also reported from the (church) fathers. According to him, these last two baptisms are united with the fifth baptism, which symbolizes death and resurrection.[83]

2.2.1. Understanding Baptism

One of the ideas that has consistently appealed to Christians throughout Christian history has been the rejection of the material world as intrinsically evil. In this respect, the various sacraments administered in the Church were seen as part of a process of sanctification of the world in Christian life. The Syriac fathers, like the Greek fathers, recognized the original state of creation as perfect, but then corrupted by human abuse and finally restored to its original perfection by the work of Christ.

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[78] Matthew, 3/11; John, 3/5; 2 Corinthians, 6/18; Galatians, 3/29; Ephesians, 1/5; Romans, 6/3-5; Colossians, 2/11.
[79] John, 1/12.
[80] John, 3/5.
[81] Matthew, 28/19.

[82] Luke, 12/50.
[83] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 21.

a view of the world to which they would return. This understanding was expressed in useful mystical terms such as heaven, the fall and the regeneration of man in heaven, which are used explicitly in the sacrament of baptism. In this respect, Mar Efrem and other church fathers had much to say about the importance of the sacrament of baptism as a central figure in the Christian understanding of the world. At the heart of all this is the r e c o g n i t i o n of baptism as a re-entry into heaven for every baptized Christian individual. Baptism, through the Holy Spirit, transforms fallen man into his first pure state in heaven. In other words, to the extent that the newborn Christian allows the Spirit to accomplish this, he is raised by the Holy Spirit to a plane where the sanctification of the material world around him is achieved. The Christian's re-entry into heaven at baptism is expressed in different ways in Syriac liturgical texts. One of the most important of these expressions is the image of "new-creation". The Christian is not simply "reborn" in the "spiritual womb" of the waters of baptism. At the same time, this rebirth is seen as highly related to the original creation of the world. The womb of water gives birth to heavenly, spiritual and eternal children through the Holy Spirit. However, it should be noted that the Spirit who sanctifies the baptismal water is the same Spirit as the Spirit of God[84] who moved over the waters at the beginning of creation in the Old Testament. Water is an ambiguous symbol. It can bring death or life. In baptism both elements are present and the Holy Spirit brings the transition from death to life (the life of the heavenly Adam). Another common way of expressing the return to the original state in heaven is the image of "entering the promised land". The crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan River were seen by the Syriac fathers as types/types of baptism. For Mar Efrem, for example, the escape from captivity in Egypt represents the Christian's escape from the domain of both Satan and death in baptism.[85] In the Eastern Church, the baptismal rites of epiphany (January 19, thirteen days after Christmas), which is considered the baptism of Jesus Christ

[84] Genesis, 1/2.
[85] Sebastian P. Brock, "World and Sacrament in the Writings of the Syriac Fathers", *SSS*, Part 1, 1-3.

There are many prayers. On this subject Hudra states: "The purified among the children of the Most High, born of the Spirit, were born in water and immediately perfected and became the spiritual firstfruits of heaven". "The just God, who created us from dust, renewed our image with water and spirit."[86]

Afrahat calls baptism the "stamp/sign of life" that is carried on the body in order to be saved from future wrath, and considers it as a second birth with the Spirit and water. Accordingly, in his first birth, man was born with a body and the spirit of life. However, in baptism he receives the Holy Spirit with his second birth. He compares Christ's baptism with the Jews' crossing of the Red Sea and points to Christ's washing the feet of his disciples at the last supper on Passover evening. Accordingly, the Jews regarded the night of Passover as the day of salvation. Christ established the mystery of baptism by washing the feet of his disciples on this night. In the New Testament, "Peter said, 'You will never wash my feet. Jesus answered, If I do not wash them, you will have no place with me."[87] He accepts this as evidence. This is because the baptized person joins the kuddas directly and eats from the holy sacrifice, which is their new food. Afrahat therefore places baptism on Nisan 14 in accordance with the Jewish lunar calendar. According to him, in baptism one joins the people of God, is cleansed from sin and eats the blood and body of Christ. His blood forgives their sins and his body purifies their bodies.[88]

Mar Efrem sees the baptism of Christ as the essence and image of the baptism of believers. He refers to the phrase "the fire and the Spirit, which are in the Jordan River, are also in our baptism". He considers baptism to be one of the basic conditions of faith, but he does not mention the thief who was crucified with Jesus Christ.

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[86] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 16-17.
[87] John, 13/8.
[88] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 68-69.

He recognizes his case as an exception.[89] For according to him, baptism is beneficial only after a full knowledge of the doctrines and practices of the faith. Mar Efrem also places baptism on Passover, the Saturday on which the catechumens, who were preparing to receive Christianity at the end of the great fast, were entitled to receive baptism. According to him, the bishop should administer the sacrament, as was customary, with three immersions in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the priest or shammas should baptize the adult male in the baptistery adjoining the church, and a female deacon or a woman from the bnay qyama should baptize the women. Mar Efrem considers baptism as a second birth after physical birth. He says that just as a newborn child needs to drink milk in order to live and grow, the person who is reborn through baptism should immediately eat the bread of the sacrament of holy sacrifice in return for the milk. According to him, baptism produces effects such as forgiveness, salvation and purification. With true baptism, death is abolished. For the one who is baptized in Christ is clothed in the garment of life, which quickens all things.[90]

Mar Narsay discusses the endowments of baptism in five categories. According to him; (1) Denying Satan and his actions, professing the true faith, formally renouncing teachings contrary to it. (2) Registering one's name in the church (community of faith), the new family, as a sign of participation in the body of Christ. (3) Every body anointed with oil signifies inviolability. (4) Three immersions in water symbolize rebirth (death and resurrection). (5) The white veil (in which the baptized are wrapped) symbolizes the new state, the end of time, and belonging to the angelic realm, and is a sign of hope for this. To explain the richness of this sacrament, Narsay uses the symbolic language of birth-growth, cleansing-blessing, death-resurrection, first creation-second creation, old man-new man, and human-divine. Accordingly, man was first created in an ordinary way. However, with baptism, he is transformed into a spiritual man and son of God.

[89] Luke, 23/41-43.
[90] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 85-86.

is being recreated.[91] For him, the resurrection of Christ is the resurrection of the world and the resurrection of humanity. The priest purifies the unclean by means of water. This is not by the power of water, but by the power of God. He destroys the power of Satan and the power of death, and the two are corrupted by baptism. The resurrection of the body and the salvation of the soul are called for. In baptism the body and soul are buried as in the tomb and both die in the mystery of the final resurrection. The priest baptizes in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He is immersed in water, just like in and out of the tomb. He stays in the water basin three times, just as Christ stayed in the tomb for three nights. In baptism death is removed from us, just as Christ tore the shroud and came out of the tomb. However, this new state requires struggle and effort. According to him, with baptism the battle with the devil and his deeds begins. He interprets the white cloth wrapped around the baptized as a symbol of embodiment for the new life. According to him, with baptism, he is stripped of his old life and begins a new life.[92]

Eastern Church writers of the Islamic period discuss and try to explain baptism and other sacraments in the context of their disputes with Muslims. Timotheos I, the Catholicos of the Eastern Church, addresses this issue in his debate with the Abbasid caliph. After answering Caliph Mahdi's question "Who is your chief and murshid?" with "Christ", he was asked "Was Christ circumcised or not?". When he answered "Yes, he was circumcised", the Caliph asked him, "If he was circumcised, why are you not circumcised? Then what is the meaning of his being the leader and the murshid?". In response, the Catholicos stated that Christ was circumcised when he was eight days old in accordance with the law (Jewish Sharia) and was also baptized when he was thirty years old. He then stated that baptism canceled circumcision and that Christ kept the law in order to lead the Jews to salvation. He said that he was not under the law, but under the Gospel.

[91] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 113.
[92] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 114.

That is why he said that while Christ was circumcised, he was not circumcised. Timotheus explains it this way:

> "We have abandoned the remembrance and the symbol, but we are subject to the original and to the truth. The Torah, with its secrets, contains signs for the Gospel. The bloody sacrifice in the Torah is a sign for the sacrifice of Christ; the priesthood and priesthood in it is a symbol for the priesthood and priesthood of Christ; and the fleshly circumcision in it is a symbol for the spiritual circumcision. Therefore, the fleshly circumcision performed by human hands was replaced by the spiritual circumcision performed by the Holy Spirit, that is, baptism."[93]

In his polemics with Muslims about baptism and washing, Ammar al-Basri criticizes the Muslims' surprise at baptism as a symbol of resurrection from the dead, even though they consider it necessary to wash with water after sexual intercourse. According to him, Christ died in his humanity, was buried, and rose from the dead. Basri states that Christ left baptism as a tangible sign in order to confirm this for us, to revive it so that we would constantly remember it, and to remind us that we too will be resurrected from the dead. For him, the model is not the thing itself, but a representation of it. If baptism symbolizes the resurrection and rebirth of man, then there is nothing more appropriate to represent life than water. Because man is created from water and earth, the water in his body is closer to air than earth and fire. Man was buried dead in the earth and rose from it alive. According to him, we are commanded to remember this by burying our bodies in water and rising from it. He likens this to a potter making a vessel out of clay and water, before putting it in the kiln to bake it, only to have it spoil and then remake it by adding water to fix it. According to him, the story of man in the person of Adam is similar to this. Because Adam, who was created from water and earth, was corrupted by sin, and God, through Christ, recreated Adam (humanity) with the water of baptism in order to renew him. According to Basri, God put man on this earth

by two births: the sperm of a man and the womb of a woman. Our birth from the father has no human form, no sign of life or movement of any kind. However

[93] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmiyye*, 37-38.

At our birth in our mothers' wombs, the human body and form are completed and perfected with the soul. In the same way, God has appointed two forms of birth for man in the afterlife. One is from water and is a type of death and resurrection from the earth. The other is birth from the side of the world through righteous living and righteous deeds. According to him, the first birth from the sperm of fathers, which is far from the reality of humanity, is similar to the baptismal birth in relation to the reality of true life of which it is a type. The second birth in the mother's womb, which is the perfection of humanity and righteous life, resembles the birth of man in which he is regenerated and acquires the perfection of the spiritual form and the reality of eternal life. This is why he says that sin is eradicated by baptism.[94] Basri uses the name "Mihrican" to describe church festivals. Mar Elia, the bishop of Nusaybin, explains the statement of faith, "We confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins" as follows: "That is, through our (re)birth from it (the Church) and its fountain of water, we receive the validity (peace) of being (God's) son and inheritance of the kingdom of the heavens and its mystery of entering it after the general resurrection (resurrection)."[95]

2.2.2. Baptism Practice

The Eastern Church continues the early Christian practice of combining baptism, confirmation and Eucharist. This rite consists of the preparation of the candidate, pouring water into the baptismal font, taking the holy oil from the altar, consecrating the oil with epilexy (a prayer invoking the Holy Spirit to bless), consecrating the baptismal water with epilexy, anointing the candidate's chest with the sign of the cross and then the whole body, immersion, confirmation and communion.[96] The liturgy consists of the epistle (readings from the letters of the Apostles), the Gospel and the litany (a series of

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[94] Michael, *Ammār al-Baṣrī*, 402-404.
[95] Ebeid, *Elias of Nisibis Commentary on the Creed*, 140.
[96] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/195-214.

is a long and elaborate ceremony in which various texts are read, such as a short prayer). Baptismal services take about one hour.[97]

At the beginning of Christianity, those who became Christians were baptized and received into the community by simply being immersed in water three times, but later on, a preparatory period called the catechumenate emerged in order to ensure that the candidates who wanted to become Christians were informed about the new religion. This period generally coincided with the eve of Easter, and thus candidates who successfully passed through this period became full Christians by performing baptism, confirmation and eucharist in stages. However, over time, with the increase in the Christian population and the stagnation of conversion movements, both the catechumenate period lost its importance and the practice of infant baptism[98] came to the fore.[99] Immersion in baptismal water and infant baptism reveal a distinctive feature of the Eastern Church. Because in churches that perform baptism by immersion, there is no infant baptism, and in churches that perform infant baptism, baptism is performed by sprinkling or pouring water on the head.[100] Although there is a canon in the Eastern Church that infants are baptized at the age of eight days, this is not fully practiced in practice. Babies are usually baptized at the age of forty days in the case of a girl and fifty-six days in the case of a boy. "Abdisho" does not mention anything about infant baptism. However, it has been the practice since early Christian families to be baptized together with their young children. However, in the Eastern Church

[97] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 29.
[98] The following New Testament passages are used as evidence for infant baptism: Acts, 11/13-14; 16/15, 33; 8/18; 1 Corinthians, 1/16.
[99] Mehmet Katar, "The Formation of the Church Calendar in Christianity", *Journal of Religious Research*, 3/8, (2000), 30.
[100] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 120.

A large baptismal font (six feet deep) is also available for adults in case of any conversion.[101]

According to Eastern Church tradition, in order to receive the divine gifts of the Holy Spirit in baptism, three important material elements must be present: holy oil, baptismal water and the laying on of hands (syamida).[102] At the beginning of the baptismal rite, water is poured into the baptismal font with various prayers and the holy oil is taken from the altar to be blessed. The blessing of the water and the oil is performed simultaneously by two priests in the baptismal font (beth mada) of the church. Both are facing east during this blessing.[103] As in the Eucharist, the most special part of baptism is the epiclesis, the prayer in which the Holy Spirit is invoked. In the Eastern Church, the Holy Spirit is invoked to bless the baptismal water and the oil used before baptism. The prayer for the invocation of the Holy Spirit over the baptismal water is as follows:

> "The Spirit who came down and stood over our Savior and showed him the type of this holy baptism, O Lord, may that same Spirit come upon this water, that he may have the power to give help and salvation to those who are baptized in it (Neethi Mar Rukhaq Kaddisha-may the Holy Ghost come)."[104]

The epiclesis prayer of sending the Holy Spirit upon the candidate for baptism is found in the Western Syriac liturgy, but not in the Eastern Church.[105] In the Eastern Church, the blessing of the oil by reciting the epiclesis prayer is also a very important practice. It is found in the earliest Syriac texts such as the *Acts of the Apostle Thomas* and in the baptismal service described by Mar Narsay. In this prayer there is a reference to Christ to send the Holy Spirit. In the Syriac tradition, the stamp/mark (rushma) means a sign of ownership. In a prayer related to it, "Receive us with your mark (rushma), who gathered us together in you, who brought us to your church."

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[101] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 17-18.
[102] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 37.
[103] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/207.
[104] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 71; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church*

of the East, 23; Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/206.
[105] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 107.

It's called a "sheep brand". It is associated with the branding of sheep belonging to the flock.[106] All Syriac traditions include anointing before and after baptism. However, some texts of the East Syriac liturgy refer to the priest making the sign of the cross by placing only his hands on the newly baptized person without using oil. In general, the practice of anointing is carried out in various periods; (1) After the completion of the catechumenal rite, but before the blessing of the baptismal water. (2) Following the blessing of the baptismal water, but before baptism. (3) After baptism and before communion. The first anointing is applied to the forehead, the second to the whole body and the last to the sensory organs. Actually

No post-baptismal anointing is known to have taken place before the Vth century, as seen in the Antiochian liturgy and in the writings of Afrahat and Mar Efrem in the IVth century. John of the Golden Mouth, writing in Antioch in the 390s, mentions two anointings before baptism, but no anointing after baptism. Post-baptismal anointing first appears in the Syriac translation of the *Catechetical Homilies of* Theodore of Mopsuestia. This new practice seems to have penetrated deeply throughout the region during the V century. For from this date onwards, almost all the sources mention it. However, there are notable exceptions, especially among Syriac writers: Narsay of the Eastern Church and Jacob of Suruc of the Syriac Orthodox Church, neither in V. norin They did not know of any post-baptismal anointing until the early VIth century. When the earliest sources on baptism, especially the *Acts of the Apostle Thomas* and the *Acts of John, are* examined, it becomes clear that there was originally only one anointing before baptism. This

[106] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 93, 96.

The practice is called "rushma", meaning sign, stamp and seal, and covers almost exclusively the head area.[107]

After the blessing of the water in the baptismal font and the olive oil brought from the altar, the candidate for baptism is anointed. Anointing before baptism is carried out as follows: The deacon (shamasha) takes the baptismal candidate, usually an infant, to the priest (qashitha) in the baptismal font for anointing. His/her dress and any earrings, necklaces and rings are removed. With three fingers, the priest makes the sign of the cross from top to bottom and from right to left with three central figures on the baby's chest. The anointing formula "N" is used to say "anointed in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever". The entire body is then anointed by the priest in an orderly manner.[108] Only adult men or women are excluded. There are strict rules regarding the anointing of women. As a woman, she must be anointed in a decent manner and avoid any behavior unbecoming the Church of God. The anointing of women should only be done by women deacons. The female deacon must be chosen from among those who are sixty years of age. The anointing should take place in a separate room next to the baptismal font and the priest's eyes should not see the woman's nakedness. After dipping three fingers in the holy oil, the priest extends his hand through a hole in the wall. The woman deacon in charge takes this hand and places it on the forehead of the woman to be anointed, and then the woman deacon anoints the rest of the body. This is the only task for which a female deaconess is required. Since the priest and deacon are not allowed to anoint, it is both essential and very important to have at least one female deacon. Where there is no female deaconess, the following provisions have been made. "If there is no female deacon, the bishop must appoint a female deacon who is able to do this work. I f there is no bishop to appoint a woman deacon, the bishop should appoint a bnath qyamadan

[107] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 23-25.

[108] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/207-208; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 19.

(one of the nuns) is licensed to perform these services. With regard to the place of anointing, if there is no separate room next to the baptismal font, then a cover should be hung around the baptismal font instead of a wall."[109]

The next step after the anointing of the whole body of the baptismal candidate is the baptism of the candidate by immersing him in the water in the baptismal font three times up to the neck level. It is a distinctive feature of the baptismal practice of this church that baptism is not performed by pouring water over the head, as in the Catholic and Orthodox churches, or by sprinkling water, as in some Protestant churches, but by full immersion. Although immersion is practiced by Baptists and Pentecostals, it is primarily an Eastern Church practice. Although the full immersion of the infant three times in cold water may seem a little unkind and dangerous, the Eastern Church insists on full immersion. This is because the root meaning of the word baptism is full immersion, and "Abdisho's words "baptism is immersion in water and washing with water" point to this.[110] According to him, the substance of baptism is pure water and the form of baptism is baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.[111] After the priest takes the baby out of the water, he gives it to the deacon. The deacon wraps it in a white cloth and hands it to the godfather to be dressed in white clothes. The baby's head is left uncovered while being dressed. This is because the priest who performs the ritual will put on the baby's headgear after the immersion and after making the sign of the cross three times before placing his hands on it. For this reason, babies are not immediately taken to the bema in the church after this stage.[112]

The next stage of the baptismal liturgy is the laying on of hands, which is the service of confirmation. Confirmation of baptism, laying on of the baptismal hand (syamida)

is the completion and sealing (htam) of the grace of the Holy Spirit received through the Holy Spirit.

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[109] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 19-21.
[110] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 21.

[111] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 22.
[112] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 23-25; Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/208.

Confirmation takes place in the main hall of the church, not in the baptismal font. The priest and deacon enter the church through the large door of the bema with oil, cross, Bible, censer, etc., and recite the prayers of laying hands on the newly baptized at the altar. The second prayer of the laying on of hands (syamida) signifies that the newly baptized infant is a full member of the Church. After this prayer, the priest baptizes the infant by making the sign of the cross on his forehead with the thumb of his right hand and the application of holy oil in the "N" formula from bottom to top and from right to left, saying, "Baptized and received into the Church in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever".[113] This ceremony corresponds to the rite of initiation in the West. In the Eastern Church, confirmation is obligatory. This is because Peter and John touched and blessed the baptized people of Samaria, thus empowering them to receive the Holy Spirit (confirmation).[114] The Eastern Church calls baptismal confirmation a "htam" (seal/stamp), like anointing.[115] The Holy Spirit does not fill them at baptism, but after the rite of empowerment.

Since baptism is an intermediate part of the Eucharist, it is celebrated simultaneously with the Eucharist to save time if there are enough clergy. However, if there are not enough clergy, the same priest who administers the Eucharist may also administer baptism. In this case, the sacraments will need to be kept on the altar for another hour after the Eucharist. Sometimes, however, depending on the circumstances, the baptism takes place before the Eucharist. In this case, the baptized infants are not given milk until after the Eucharist. This is because the infants must receive communion at the end of the Eucharist. The baptized infants receive communion first, and then the rest of the congregation receives communion. In any case, it is quite clear that there can be no baptism without the Eucharist. However, near death

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[113] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 25-27; Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/208-210.
[114] Acts of the Apostles, 8/5-17; 19/1-6.
[115] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 27.

who has been baptized is exempted from this.[116] Confirmation is also an obligatory part of baptism. But this is something that is found in the tradition of the Eastern churches and is not unique to the Nestorian Church.[117]

2.3. Anointing with Holy Oil (Misha d "Mshihuta)

According to "Abdisho", the holy oil known as "Misha d-Mshihuta" in the Eastern Church is an apostolic tradition. According to him, it is based on the holy oil that was consecrated by the apostles themselves and has been passed down in the Church in a line of succession until today. The purpose of its use is learned from its physical properties and from scripture. The divine book teaches that those who, according to the law, are set apart for the symbolic priesthood[118] or the kingdom of the world[119] are to be anointed with anointing oil. This is also true for Christians, and those who are set apart for the heavenly kingdom and the true priesthood must be anointed with this same holy oil with its various symbols in order to become true brothers and sisters of Christ, the true anointed one, miraculously anointed by his union with God and his participation in him.[120] "Abdişo" refers to the sentence "For this God, your God, anointed you more than your friends with the oil of joy"[121] and states that Jesus Christ is both the anointing and the anointed, the anointing with his divinity and the anointing with his humanity. According to him, this sacrament is administered to protect against worldly harm and the evil of the devil. He gives the following example to support this:

> "As for the natural properties of oil, we know that the most eminent artist, after completing a painting with all its magnificent colors, anoints it with oil so that it is not easily damaged or damaged by contact with other objects. In the same way, those who devote themselves to the Heavenly Angelût and true spirituality are anointed so that they are not harmed by worldly harm and the evil of the devil."[122]

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[116] Mar Aprem Mooken, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 28-29.
[117] Mar Aprem Mooken, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 119.
[118] Exodus, 30/22-30.
[119] 1 Samuel, 10/1; 1 Kings, 1/39; 2 Kings, 9/6;11/12.
[120] Hebrews, 2/17.
[121] Psalms, 45/7, Hebrews 1/9.
[122] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 21-22

"Abdişo" goes on to say that the substance of the holy oil is pure olive oil and its form is apostolic blessing.[123] The holy oil is blessed and kept in a chest inside the altar. The renewal of this oil is done by the priest during the baptismal ceremony. The holy oil is mainly used for baptism and the consecration of the church and altar, but in the past it was also used for the consecration of clergy, although this is not practiced today.[124]

In Syriac literature, olive oil was seen as closely linked to the Holy Spirit. But rather than being an actual symbol of the Spirit, the oil was thought of as an ideal guide and executor of the Spirit's power. "This oil is the beloved companion of the Holy Spirit, following the Holy Spirit like a disciple," Mar Efrem writes. Likewise, olive oil (meshha/oil) is widely regarded as a symbol of the Messiah (Mshiha/oil), since it comes from the same root as the word Messiah. "From whatever angle I look at the oil, Jesus looks at me from it," Mar Efrem says[125] . There is an important interplay between the prayers and formulas used in connection with different anointings in various ceremonies. However, its position in the ceremony is fairly stable. In the Syriac tradition the following terms are used in relation to oil: "htam" (seal, attestation/seal), "rsham" (symbol, sign/sign), "mshah" (anointing, anointing/anoint) and "tba" (stamp, seal/imprint).[126] Regarding the substance used for anointing, the earliest texts only mention "meshha" (olive oil). The East Syriac tradition does not include "myron" (murun) oil. In this respect, the writers of this church emphasize that olive oil is the only constituent.[127] It is not boiled with fragrant herbs, as the West Syriacs prepare murun oil. It has already been mentioned

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[123] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 21-22.
[124] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 35.
[125] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 16-17.
[126] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 23.
[127] Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 25.

As mentioned, the recitation of the epiclesis prayer over the oil is a very important practice in the Eastern Church. The "rushma", a sign and stamp of ownership, was used with images such as the stamping of sheep belonging to (Christ's) flock, the royal seal and the enrollment with the stamp as a new soldier of Christ. The holy oil is recognized as a preservative, but also as a healing and purifying agent.[128]

2.4. Bread and Wine Rite (Kurbana-Kudasa)

The Eucharist is one of the most important sacraments of Christianity. In the Eastern Church, the name "qurbana" (sacrifice) is generally used for this sacrament and rite, but the names "knusya" (assembly), "communion", "raze" (plural form of raza), "qudasa" (kudasa-consecration), "dukhrana" (remembrance), "dirha" (sacrifice) and "asai rabbi" (the Lord's table) are also used.[129] Eucharist is a Greek word meaning the act of giving thanks to God. As a term, it refers to the ritual celebrated in memory of Jesus Christ's last supper with his disciples. In the Gospel of Matthew, one of the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus' last supper is described as follows:

> "During the meal Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples. "Take, eat," he said, "this is my body. Then he took a cup, gave thanks and gave it to his disciples.
> "Drink from it, all of you," he said. "For this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine again until that day when I drink it fresh with you in my Father's angel."[130]

Paul's statements on the subject are as follows:

> "On the night of the handing over, the Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said: "This is my body which is given up for you. Do this in remembrance of Me". In the same way, after the meal, He took the cup and said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this in remembrance of me every time you drink it. Every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until the coming of the Lord."[131]

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[128] Brock, *The Holy Spirit iin the Syrian Baptismal Tradition*, 96-97, 100, 103.
[129] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 16-17; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 71-72.
[130] Matthew, 26/26-29.
[131] 1 Corinthians 11/23-26.

For Matthew, Mark, Luke and Paul, it is participation in the body and blood of Jesus. However, in the Gospel of John, this event takes on a wider meaning. John explains that the "bread of life" in the person of Jesus is a superior food to the food of the Jews in the desert (manna);[132] Jesus' flesh and blood is a spiritual food that provides and sustains eternal life. The Gospel of John tells us this: "Jesus said to them: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. He who eats my body and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day, for my body is true food and my blood is true drink."[133] The Eucharist is a practice that Christianity inherited from Judaism. It is a ritual influenced by the mystical fraternal communion that comes from the Passover meal in Judaism, which is accompanied by people sitting around the same table. Initially it simply entailed the breaking of bread, but later it became the center of worship.[134]

"The sacrifice of Christ's body and blood" which defines this sacrament with the words

"Abdisho" bar Brikha explains the view of the Eastern Church. According to him, the holy sacrifice is a religious service (ceremony) offered by the lower (earthly) to the higher (heavenly) through the material elements in the hope of forgiveness of sins and answers to prayers. "Abdisho" states that the ancient sacrifices (in Jewish law) consisted of non-rational animals and the blood of the body[135] but with the Christians, the Only-begotten Son of God, who took the form of a servant, offered his own body to the Father as a sacrifice for the life of the world. According to him, this is why John called him "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" [136] . In the same way

[132] John, 6731-35.
[133] John, 6/ 53-55.
[134] A. Hikmet Eroğlu, "Differences in Understanding between Catholics and Protestants on the Eucharist", *Ankara University Theology Faculty Journal* 39 (Ankara, 1999), 440- 441.

[135] Leviticus, 4/4.
[136] John 1/29.

"His blood was shed for the new covenant and for the remission of the sins of many"[137] and "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son"[138] as evidence. According to him, Christ offered himself to the Father as a living (life) and reasonable (natural) sacrifice for all creation. Thus, he reconciled the world to the glory (of the Father) and realized salvation for angels and humans.[139] Since, according to "Abdisho", it is impossible for the sacrifice on the cross for the salvation of all to be reenacted in exactly the same way, without any change, in every place, at every time and for everyone, he, looking with a merciful eye and contemplating with compassion and wisdom, on the night he was betrayed for the life of the world, took bread in his holy, pure and immaculate hands, blessed it, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying to them: "This is my body, which was sacrificed for the life of the world for the forgiveness of sins". In the same way he blessed the cup and gave it to them saying: "This is my blood, which is the new covenant. It is my blood shed for the forgiveness of the sins of many. Eat this bread all of you, drink this cup all of you, do this every time you gather to remember me."[140] For him, by divine command, the bread became his holy body and the wine his precious blood.[141] All who receive them with a firm faith, without doubt, receive forgiveness of sins, purification, enlightenment, the great hope of resurrection from the dead, participation in the heavenly realm and new life. According to him, whenever we approach these sacraments, we meet Christ himself, and in the reception we hold him in our hands and kiss him. We are united with him, his holy body mingles with our body and his pure blood mingles with our blood. "According to Abdisho, by faith we know that the body in heaven and the body in the Church are one body. According to him, the substance of this sacrament of Christ is wine, which is best

suited to represent the body, and

[137] Mark 14/24.
[138] John, 3/16.
[139] Hebrews, 12/24; Romans, 5/10; Ephesians, 2/16; 2 Corinthians, 5/19.
[140] 1 Corinthians 11/23-26. These expressions are also used in the Nestorian anaphora. See Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 23, footnote 98.

[141] The transformation referred to is not physical but has to do with the inherent power of the sacrament to forgive the sins of those who partake of it in true faith.

is commanded to be wheat. It is presented in form through His life-giving Word and the descent of the Holy Spirit.[142]

2.4.1. Eucharistic Understanding

Both the Syriac tradition and the Eastern Christian tradition in general see a close relationship between the incarnation and the Eucharist. They see deep similarities between the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the sacrifice in the Eucharist and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Mary. In this respect, the prayer of the epiclesis and the angel's announcement to Mary seem to be very much connected.[143] Mar Efrem uses the terms "rahlef" and "agen" in Syriac literature to refer to the actions and activities of the Holy Spirit, especially in the context of the Holy Spirit's actions in the sacraments of baptism, eucharist and priestly consecration. According to him, what happens on the altar with the power of the Holy Spirit in the epiclesis prayer during the Eucharist is a depiction of what the Holy Spirit accomplished in Mary during the Incarnation.[144] He emphasizes that the fire and the Spirit that descended on Mary during the Incarnation are likewise present in the Eucharistic liturgy of the Church.[145] Mar Narsay also draws parallels between the incarnation and the Eucharist, stating in his commentary on the Eucharist that, similar to what took place in Mary at the incarnation, in the epiclesis prayer of the Eucharist, bread and wine were transformed into the body and blood of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.[146] When Babai talks about the actions of the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb in forming the body for the logos, anointing it with holy oil, and making the human body ready to receive the logos, he tries to explain this with the example of the transformation of bread and wine into the flesh and blood of Christ at the same time when the Holy Spirit is invoked by the priest during the Eucharist. According to him

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[142] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 22-23.
[143] Sebastian P. Brock, "The Priesthood of the Baptised: Some Syriac Perspectives", *SSS*, part II, 19; "Mary and The Eucharist: an oriental perspective, *SSS*, part IV. 30-40.
[144] Jincy, O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 20.
[145] Brock, "Mary and the Eucharist", 31.
[146] Jincy, O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 22.

According to this understanding, in the incarnation, the God Logos assumes human nature, while in the Eucharist the believer participates in divinity by partaking of the body and blood of Christ.[147] According to this understanding, the Logos, who becomes God by nature through the incarnation, becomes man by grace, while the believer, who becomes man by nature through the sacrament of the Eucharist, becomes the son of God by grace.[148] Thus, while divinity descends from the top down to take on human nature, humanity joins divinity by ascending from the bottom up.

According to the Eastern Church, the mystery of the Eucharist was instituted by Jesus Christ himself, who is the supreme priest. Its continuity within the community (church) is ensured by the Holy Spirit and the priest. The purpose of its establishment is seen as the realization of man's salvation through his participation in the body of Christ.[149] An important feature of the Eucharist for the Church is that it is perceived as the plane of union or intersection of the two-worldly theological proposition of heavenly and earthly. The two-world understanding of the Eucharist is found in the *Acts of the Apostle Thomas.* In this sense, the Eucharist is on the one hand connected with the sacrifice of Christ and on the other hand a way of contacting the heavenly world. In this case, the sacred elements (bread and wine) are the instruments of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Eucharist not only represents the suffering of Christ, but also becomes a means of contact with the heavenly kingdom through the work of the Holy Spirit on the elements. This understanding is also reflected in the structure of the church, which is conceived as a place where two worlds intersect.[150]

The Eastern Church, like many other Eastern churches, does not have a definition of transubstantiation and consubstantiation.[151] Mar

In a memoir attributed to Narsay, without using the term substance transformation, this meaning

[147] Geevarghese, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, 161-162.
[148] Brock, "Mary and the Eucharist", 32.
[149] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 86.
[150] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 18.

[151] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 71.

The last supper is a time of the last supper, and various expressions are used to describe it. Mar Narsay, after quoting the words of Jesus at the last supper, says the following:

> "You offer the sacrifice of bread and wine, as you were commanded. The body and blood become bread and wine through the indwelling and visitation of the Holy Spirit. Because Christ called bread and wine His body and blood. It is not like an image or a naming. The body is fixed and the blood is real, even if the nature of the two is infinitely remote from it. Christ is united with the bread and wine on the altar... Look at the bread and wine on the table where the two are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit descends through the priest and descends on the bread and sanctifies it with the greatness of his power... The Holy Spirit descends on the table and gives power to the bread and wine until they are given life."[152]

However, the attribution of the memra containing the above statements to Mar Narsay is questionable.[153] Badger, quoting from Nestorian books, states that Nestorians believed that the sacred elements accepted in the Eucharist were transformed into the body and blood of Christ through faith. According to him, however, while this is observed, it is important to note that this transformation does not necessarily involve the doctrine of a change of substance. Such a word was not known to them.[154] Considering that discussions about the change of substance appeared in the Christian Western world at a later date, it seems more plausible that the Eastern Church[155] did not have a specific view on this subject.

2.4.2. Liturgy of Mar Addai and Mar Mari

From the early stages of Eastern Christianity, the term liturgy (kuddasha) was used to specifically refer to the Eucharist. Therefore, in order to understand the Eucharist, it is important to familiarize oneself with the liturgy used in the Eastern Church. What is commonly referred to by modern liturgists as the "Syriac Eastern Rite" is the special liturgy of the Eastern Church. This liturgy

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[152] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 115.
[153] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 115-116.
[154] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/170.

[155] Eroğlu, "Bread and Wine Ritual", 442.

It is also called the "Nestorian", "Persian" or "Chaldean" rite.[156] Three liturgies are used in the Eastern Church: the Mass of Mar Addai and Mar Mari, the Mass of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the Mass of Nestorius. The Mass of Mar Addai and Mar Mari is the main liturgy that is often used, while the Masses of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius are only anaphora. The first one represents the Syriac tradition, while the other two were transferred from the Greek world to Syriac literature in the VI century. Although an overwhelming majority of Western scholars claim that these two works are not the genuine work of Nestorius or Theodore, Nestorians disagree. The liturgy of Mar Addai and Mar Mari is used today by the Eastern Church as well as by the Chaldean Church, Nestorians who converted to the Roman Catholic Church, and the Syro-Malabar Church in India. The latter two groups have updated this liturgy according to their new positions.[157]

Attributed to the apostles of the East, Mar Addai and Mar Mari, it is estimated to have been composed in Syriac between the second and fourth centuries. The anaphora in this liturgy retains traces of apostolic reflections with a structure similar to the Jewish "Birkat Hamazon" prayer (a prayer of thanksgiving after a congregational meal). There is a great parallel with the celebration of the Eucharist in the *Acts of the Apostle Thomas*, the earliest reference to the liturgy in Syriac literature. This work presents the celebration of the Eucharist as a commemoration of the paschal mystery and includes the various stages of the Eucharistic celebration, such as the sacrifice, the primitive form of the Eucharistic prayer, the breaking of the bread and the mixing of the chalice.[158] We also note that the biblical references quoted in the eucharistic prayer in this liturgy are in Greek.

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[156] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 10.

[157] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 46-47; Albayrak, *Chaldeans and Nestorians*, 95-96. The rites of Mar Addai and Mar Mari are used every day except the Sundays between Advent and Palm Sunday. The liturgy of Theodore of Mopsuestia is used on five special occasions; Epiphany, John

the Baptist Day, the Memorial of the Greek Doctor, Nineveh Fast Wednesday, and the Thursday before Easter. See ibid, 46, footnote 1.

[158] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 10-11, 14, 16-17; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 65.

Syriac texts and not from the Syriac texts.[159] It is a very archaic liturgy that took its present form in the early VIIth century. Compared to other rites, it developed in a Semitic environment, isolated from the Hellenistic culture of the Roman Empire, and retained the character of Jewish Christianity. However, while Jewish Christianity is the dominant element, it can also be seen as a product of the fusion of Assyrian-Babylonian and Iranian cultures.[160] Although the origins of the East Syriac liturgy are attributed to the cities of Urfa and Seleucia-Ctesiphon, its early period is not fully known due to the lack of primary sources.[161] In the thirteenth canon of the 410 synod, it is mentioned that the Eastern Church would henceforth celebrate according to the Western rite, which Mar Mar Marutha and Mar Isaac had previously celebrated in Seleucia.[162] It is assumed that the Western rite refers to the Syriac rite commonly used in the area around Urfa and that there is no major difference between this rite and the rite used in Persia.[163] However, due to the lack of liturgical texts available to the Eastern Church before this synod, the exact form of this liturgy is not known.

Macomber adds this ancient liturgy of the Eastern Church as a fourth liturgy to the liturgies found in Antioch, Jerusalem (two in Greek) and Urfa (in Syriac) until the 400s, when he argues that it was abandoned at the synod of 410. According to him, the Syriac liturgy in Urfa, which originated mainly in Antioch, borrowed its anaphoral structure from Jerusalem, even though it borrowed its meter chants from Urfa. The ancient liturgy of the Eastern Church is ultimately considered to be an independent development of the Urfa liturgy.[164] During the reign of Patriarch Mar Aba (540-552), Theodore of Mopsuestia and

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[159] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 55.
[160] William F. Macomber, "A History of the Chaldean Mass", *Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies* 11/2 (1997), 70-71.
[161] Albayrak, *Chaldeans and Nestorians*, 98; Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 10-11.
[162] *Synodicon Orientale,* 266-267.
[163] Macomber, "A History of the Chaldean Mass", 73.
[164] For more information see. Macomber, "A History of the Chaldean Mass", 70-81; "A Theory on the Origins of the Syrian, Maronite and Chaldean Rites", *OCP* 39 (Rome, 1973), 235-242.

The Nestorian anaphora were introduced into the Syriac East liturgy along with the Byzantine Litanies (Angel of Peace) and the Trisagion. During the reign of Catholicos Isho "yab III (650-658), revisions and regulations were made regarding the Eastern Church liturgy, the number of liturgies was reduced to three and the anaphora attributed to Mar Efrem, Mar Barsauma, John of the Golden Mouth and Diodore of Tarsus were removed. During the reign of Catholicos Timotheos I (780-823), the "Lord's Prayer" was added at the beginning and end of the liturgy. During the reigns of Elijah Abu Halim III (1176-1190) and Yahballaha II (1190-1222), the daily liturgical prayers were enriched.[165]

2.4.2.1. Some General Characteristics

The most important feature of the Mass of Mar Addai and Mar Mari is that it lacks the words of institution or the narrative of institution. [166]The words of institution (also known as the words of consecration) are the repetition or reflection in the Eucharist of a narrative of the words and actions of Jesus Christ when he blessed the bread and wine at the Last Supper. The earliest manuscript preserving the anaphora of Mar Addai and Mar Mari is preserved in a Hudra book from the Church of Mar Esh "aya in Mosul, dating to the Xth century. Unlike later manuscripts, this manuscript does not contain the foundation narrative, nor does it contain the prayer of intercession (kushapa), which the celebrant says in a low voice while kneeling. The other oldest manuscript, dated to the XIIth century, also lacks a foundation narrative.[167] However, later copies of the liturgical texts of the Eastern Church and the various groups that split from it contain words of foundation.[168] Mar "Abdisho" bar Brikha, in his commentary on the liturgy, explains that the blessing of the divine gifts in the liturgy is the power of the Spirit.

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[165] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 17-18; Macomber, "A History of the Chaldean Mass", 74-76.
[166] 1 Corinthians 11:23-25: "I learned from the Lord what I delivered to you. On the night of the

transfiguration the Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said: "This is my body which was given up for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way, after the meal, He took the cup and said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this in remembrance of me every time you drink it."

[167] William F. Macomber (ed.), "The Oldest Known Text of the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari", *OCP* 32, (1966), 341-343.

[168] Uwe Michael Lang, "Eucharist without Institution Narrative? The Anaphora of Addai and Mari Revisited", ed. B. Gherardini, *Divinitas* 47 (Citta del Vaticano, 2007), 228--233.

and considers both the foundation narrative and the epiclesis prayer to be essential elements of the celebration of the Eucharist. Likewise, as quoted above from the same author, "The substance of this sacrament of Christ is ordained to be wine and wheat, which are best suited to represent the body. In form it is offered by means of his life-giving word and by the descent of the Holy Spirit"[169] , clearly referring to the words of the foundation. However, despite these statements, there is no clear evidence that these expressions were used in the liturgical celebrations of that period. It can be assumed that these statements of "Abdişo" coincided with a period when relations were established with the missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church and were a response to criticism about the lack of founding words. There are various debates among scholars on the subject as to whether the early forms of the Mar Addai and Mar Mari liturgical text do not contain an establishment narrative and the later additions are secondary, or whether this liturgy contains words of establishment in its early stages.[170] It has been argued that although there is no explicit foundational narrative in this liturgy, there is a brief allusion to the Last Supper in the Eucharistic prayer with the words "received your example through tradition", which may implicitly correspond to words of foundation.[171] While the absence of words of institution is not unusual in the West Syriac tradition, it is shocking for traditions that believe that the expression of words of institution accomplishes consecration.[172] In the Mar Addai and Mar Mari liturgy, the Eucharistic prayer is said at the end of the third Gehantha and is immediately followed by the epiclesis:[173]

Another striking feature of this liturgy is that the second person of the Trinity (Christ) is considered very important in the Eucharistic prayer. The Eucharistic prayer is addressed to the Son, not to the Father.

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[169] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 23.
[170] For these debates, see Lang, "Eucharist without Institution Narrative?"; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 47-57.
[171] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 67.

[172] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 118.
[173] A. Geltson, *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 48-55.

It does. It is argued that this is an important piece of evidence for the antiquity of this rite.[174] The Eucharistic prayer of this rite can be broadly divided into three parts: (1) an address of praise in the name of the Creator and Redeemer; (2) a thanksgiving for what He has done for man; (3) a special commemoration of Christ's death and resurrection, following His example, for which praise and thanksgiving are again offered to the divine name.[175] The fact that the Eucharistic prayer is addressed to the Son is consistent with the Western view that the Eucharistic consecration is performed by the Son rather than by the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, but there is a problem inherent in the terminology of the "Word of the Spirit". The invocation of the Holy Spirit is used differently in the Epiclesis prayer: "And may your Holy Spirit come, O Lord!" Since the prayer is addressed to the Son, it may raise doubts as to whether the Holy Spirit of Christ is meant by these expressions. If the first part is taken as a basis, it would seem that the blessing is by the Holy Spirit. However, in the Syriac tradition, with the testimony of Afrahat and Mar Efrem, the theology of consecration is in favor of the Son. The "moment of consecration" taught by the Eastern Church epic. This is seen by some as one of the reasons for the neglect of the "words of institution". In this respect, unlike the western tradition, the liturgy is completed with the epiclesis without the words of institution. However, there is no doubt that in the epiclesis prayer the Holy Spirit is invoked, not the spirit of the second person of the Trinity (the Son). According to Narsay, the moment of consecration is nothing more than the completion of the epiclesis. The priest raises his voice to be heard by all and, in addition, bends his knees before and after the epiclesis. However, in another part of the poem Narsay combines kneeling and bowing with the greeting. Therefore, only the bowing of the head is permitted, not the kneeling. This rule is also found in the Mar Addai and Mar Mari liturgy.[176] Finally, in the rite of Mar Addai and Mar Mari

[174] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 63.

[175] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 64.
[176] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 69-70.

It should be noted that intercession and mediation take precedence over prayer and invocation, and also that there is no demand for the transubstantiation of material elements such as bread and wine into blood and flesh in the Eucharist.[177]

Another aspect of the Eastern Church liturgy is the ancient practice of catechumens* . Since the Eastern Church is a church that attaches importance to missionary activities and has achieved success in this regard, it has a special rule regarding the participation of catechumens in the first part of the liturgy. The Eucharist consists of two main parts and while catechumens can participate in the first part, they cannot participate in the second part, which is the main part of the liturgy. The first part of the Eucharist is called the Liturgy of the Word and the second part is called the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word begins with the Lord's Prayer, followed by the recitation of the Psalms, the Prayer of Adam, the Trisagion, two Old Testament lessons, an Epistle and a New Testament lesson. Finally, it concludes with a long litany, which is recited by the priest and concludes with a prayer that requires bowing. This is the final rite for catechumens. The Liturgy of the Word fulfills a pedagogical function of communicating the Word of God to the catechumens through Bible lessons, sermons and prayers. However, the actual liturgy of the Eucharist involves the consecration of bread and wine and communion. In the Liturgy of the Word, the elements of bread and wine are kept in chalices on either side of the altar, not brought to the altar table or kept out of sight of the congregation. The catechumens are not yet baptized and therefore cannot participate in the second part, and after their exclusion, the actual ceremony with the elements on the altar table begins. Only baptized members of the Church may participate in the second part of the liturgy.[178]

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[177] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 59.
* Candidates preparing to enter Christianity.
[178] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 73-74.

The formula for the removal of the catechumens is as follows: Let everyone who has not been baptized come out, let everyone who has not received the sign of life come out, let everyone who does not receive it come out, let those who hear go and turn to the doors. But the removal of the catechumens

It should be noted that from the Xth century onwards it was considered ancient. In this period, unbaptized believers were allowed to be present at Mass and only those considered heretics were asked to leave the church. The closing of the doors was entrusted to the sub-deacons. The exclusion and exclusion of catechumens from the second section is thought to have been abandoned in the VIIth century during the reign of Isho'yab III. However, although this ancient rule regarding catechumens was not applied, the formula survives to this day in the liturgical text and is repeated during the liturgy.[179] The formula for the expulsion of catechumens, which reads, "Let all who do not receive it leave," is interpreted as the expulsion of all those who do not receive communion. In fact, the formula does not specifically mention the term Eucharist. It is difficult to guess what is meant by the pronoun "him" in the formula. It has been suggested that it does not refer to the holy sacrifice, but to baptism, and that it is certainly intended for the catechumens who are able to participate in the first part of the rite.[180] Mar Narsay also gives various instructions regarding those who are to participate in the sacrificial part of the Eucharist (the second part). According to him, the unbaptized cannot participate in the mystery of the Church. This is because those who do not belong to the church family do not have this right. Those who have not received the sign of life and those who hold heretical beliefs cannot participate in this mystery. According to him, this continues until the heretics receive the sign of life. It is clear from Mar Narsay's statements that repentance is meant by the sign of life.[181]

[179] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 74-75.

[180] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 75-76.
[181] Sako, *Abauna "s-Surian*, 115-116.

It is doubtful whether there is any place in the liturgical worship of the Eastern Church for the preaching of the Word of God (sermon), although it is present today. The absence of the sermon has been attributed to two reasons. The first is that the liturgy is already long enough without a sermon. Compared to the Catholic or Protestant liturgy in the West, the Eastern Church liturgy is too long. Considering the fact that in the Eucharist nothing is allowed to be eaten or drunk until the sacred bread and wine are received, it is clear that extending the already long service with a sermon would disturb the congregation. In addition, fasting for Sunday services begins at midnight on Saturday. While fasting does not pose a significant challenge for the morning services, it is quite difficult for the evening services. Because in this case, fasting is required for about twenty-five hours. For this reason, evening Masses are celebrated only twice a year, on the Thursday before Easter and on Holy Saturday. The afternoon service is held on the three days of the Nineveh Commemoration, known as "bavootha". Apart from these five special days, all services are always celebrated in the morning. The second reason can be explained by an interesting feature of Nestorian liturgy. Before the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel, hymns called Turgama, which interpret and explain the Bible, are sung. Turgama are historical or doctrinal sermons written in the form of poetry. In this case, it can be said that there is a sermon before the reading of the Bible.[182] In fact, there is a very old canon about the preaching of the Word of God on Sunday. In canon nine of the synod of 410, the Bible is to be read every Sunday along with other books, the Word of God is to be preached until the third or fourth hour, and sacrifices are to be offered.[183] But in any case, the expression preaching the word of God does not mean a compulsory preaching as we understand it today.[184]

[182] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 77-79.
[183] *Synodicon Orientale*, 265.
[184] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 80.

The liturgy of the Eastern Church, especially in the first part, the Liturgy of the Word, connects both the Old Testament and the New Testament as a place of worship and cult. The Church is seen as a figure of the Old Testament temple and at the same time a forefigure of the heavenly Jerusalem (the heavenly temple) of which Christ, as high priest, is the eternal ruler. In this respect, the first part resembles the synagogue services with the recitation of the Psalms and various lessons from the Old Testament and is a continuation of the Jewish tradition. Indeed, when speaking of the Eucharist, Afrahat characterizes it as a Christian Passover, the Manna as a type of Eucharist, and the church as the equivalent of a house where Jews eat the paschal lamb. The second part of the liturgy, however, is a sacrifice of thanksgiving for divine grace. Since Christ is the dispenser of this divine grace, the celebration of the Eucharist is a representation of his life. The Eucharist and its epiclesis contain the prayers, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, his resurrection, his communion and the participation of the faithful in him. In this sense, the first part (the Liturgy of the Word) corresponds to the service of the Jewish synagogue, centered on the reading and exposition of the Torah, while the second part (the Eucharist) corresponds to the Jewish temple ceremonies, where grain and animal sacrifices are offered.[185]

2.4.3. Eucharistic Adoration

There are three important elements that a sacrament must have in order to be valid: the priest, the people (the congregation) and the rituals. As mentioned earlier, for the Eastern Church, without the sacrament of the priesthood, the other sacraments cannot be performed. The priest represents and personifies the person of Christ during the Eucharist. This is why he is called "Navsha d-Isho" in Syriac.[186] The priest receives the bread of Jesus Christ during the Eucharist,

[185] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 18, 23-24.
[186] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 3-4.

[187] participates in the actions of Christ by enacting the actions of his blessing, dividing and giving to his apostles. The Eucharist cannot be celebrated without a deacon and another priest assisting the celebrant. This rule is observed only among Nestorians.[188] The vestments worn by the clergy during the Eucharist generally consist of a white robe without a hood (mapra), a long, white, seamless shirt with a closed front (supra), a silk scarf (urara), a sash (zunara) and a hood (birtuna). The urara, decorated with crosses, is wrapped around the shoulders and the zunara around the waist over the long white shirt called sudra. The presiding bishop or priest wears the robe called mapra on top. Nothing is worn on the head during the Eucharist.[189] The second element, the congregation, does not simply participate, but actively participates in the liturgy by standing, praying, gesturing, responding to mutual prayers, bowing, and receiving the sacred elements. The liturgy consists of a series of specific prayers, words, chants and actions.[190] The Eucharist is not taken outside the altar (madbha). As it is a sacred place, only ordained clergy who are fasting and wearing appropriate clothing and special footwear may enter it. If these rules are violated, the altar must be consecrated with or without oil, depending on the nature of the violation as prescribed in the canons. The altar is always located at the east end of the church. The priest always faces east when saying the prayers. When the sacraments are distributed, he turns west to face the congregation. In the main area of the church, men and women sit in separate sections. Men and boys sit in the front section, while women, with their heads covered, sit in the back section. This seating arrangement should also be noted as a distinctive feature of the church.[191]

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[187] Luke, 24/30.
[188] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 59.
[189] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 57; Albayrak, *Chaldeans and Nestorians*, 83, 159.
[190] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 4-5; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 57.
[191] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 59, 60, 62.

The Eucharist of the Eastern Church consists of three stages. The first stage of the liturgy involves various preparations that begin on the evening before Sunday, from Saturday to Sunday. These preparations include a special ceremony for the preparation and baking of the bread for the sacrifice and the sacrament of repentance and absolution (Husoya). Today, the ceremony of repentance takes place immediately before the application of the sacred elements in the Eucharist.[192] The acceptance of bread and wine as the material elements of the Eucharistic mystery is based on the fact that they are best suited to represent the body.[193] They are prepared in a separate ceremony and placed in niches in the north and south walls of the sanctuary (beth kanke) before the beginning of the service. In the Eastern Church tradition, the sacrifice of bread and wine is compared to the Old Testament practice of Melchizedek's sacrifice of bread and wine[194] and the Jewish Passover[195] . Accordingly, bread and drink perfected the animal sacrifice.[196] Bread and wine, which correspond to wheat and vine, symbolize the earth, water, air and sun in the universe, representing the whole cosmos and all creation. According to II Timotheos, the four ingredients used for dough - wheat flour, water, salt and oil - also correspond to the four elements of earth, water, fire and air. The addition of the holy leavened dough (malka) symbolizes the presence of the rational spirit in the body of Christ. This is also a crystallological reflection, showing that the body (humanity) of Christ is not deficient. The chalice must also consist of wine mixed with water.[197] The Eastern Church uses the name "lakhma" for leavened bread and "pathira" for unleavened bread.

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[192] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 62.
[193] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 23.
[194] Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord "s Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist,* 18.
[195] Exodus, 25/30; Leviticus, 24/5-9.
[196] Numbers, 29/6-39.
[197] Toma, "Basic Features of the Liturgy", 22.

Leavened bread is used in the Eucharist.[198] The bread is prepared in the form of thin biscuits and is called "bukri" (firstborn). They are placed on the altar before the start of the service on Sunday, but are kept out of sight of the audience until the catechumens are brought out during the first part of the Eucharist.

The Mar Addai and Mar Mari liturgy includes three special prayers called Kushapa, Gehantha and Kanona (Qanona). Kushapa is a special intercessory prayer offered by the celebrant. The celebrant offers the kushapa as a preparation for the reception of holy communion or as an expression of his or her personal experience of piety or repentance. This prayer is said silently while kneeling. Gehantha means "inclination" and is an intercessory prayer said while bowing in a voice audible at the altar. Kanona is a Greek word of Greek origin and is a poetic refrain for the Psalms. It is a conclusion and refrain to the Gehanta, sung in a loud voice. It is sung when the priest stands and stretches his hands above his head. Kuddasha (Hebrew qadussah, a rabbinic term for synagogue prayer) means to bless and sanctify. It is also used as a title for the entire eucharistic liturgy and the anaphora itself. The frequent use of this term for liturgical anaphora indicates the essential function of the liturgy as a sanctification, whether for the consecration of God's people or for the divine gifts offered to God to be consecrated. Apart from these, there are various texts called Turgama, Karozutha, Teshbohta. Turgama, which means commentary, is the explanatory and exegetical verse sermons and hymns read before the Epistle and the Gospel. Karozutha, which means proclamation, announcement, contains litanies and commands spoken by the deacon during the liturgy and ceremony. It is in the nature of a münacaat and is sung in a reciprocal manner. Praise and

[198] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 63. The preparation of the bread and the sacrament of Holy Maya will be discussed in detail later.

Tesbohta, which means "praise", includes the hymns recited in the Eucharist during the communion of the faithful.[199]

The first part of the Eucharist begins with the ceremonial bringing of the sacred elements to the altar (the Small Entrance). However, they are kept out of sight. The service begins with the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. After the "Lord's Prayer" and various prayers of the priests, certain parts of the Psalms (Marmitha) are sung in unison. The hymn of the sanctuary (onitha d "kanke) is sung. After this, the "Lakhumara"* , the Prayer of Adam three times and the Holy Trinity Prayer (trisagion) are recited three times, with incense by the deacon. This is followed by the reading of various lessons from the Bible. The priest who will read the text is first blessed by the celebrant. The congregation remains seated during the reading of these lessons. The first lesson is the Old Testament lesson, usually either one of the five books of the Torah (Torah) or a passage from one of the Prophets (Neviim). The reading of this lesson is concluded with an appropriate Psalm verse (Shuraya). The deacon reads the Epistle** . After some short prayers of the priests, the priest takes the Bible to read, during which incense is used. Before the reading of the Gospel, Zumara (a hymn form with expressions of thanksgiving to God) and Turgama are recited. After the reading of the Gospel, a sermon is supposed to follow. However, this is not usually practiced. At this time money is collected from the congregation. After this, the introduction to liturgical worship begins. Various hymns and prayers are sung between the deacon and the congregation. The "Father of Blessings" Karozutha and its appendix are recited between the deacon and the congregation. At this time the catechumens are asked to come out. During a certain part of this prayer the congregation kneels and after a certain period of time s t a n d s up. The deacon's

[199] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 58; Stylianos Muksuris, *The anaphorae of the liturgy of Sts. Addai and Mari and the Byzantine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great: A Comparative Study*, (Durham: Durham University, PhD Thesis, 1999), 14; Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 11.

* Christological hymns that precede prayers.
** Various passages read from the letters of the apostles.

As the prayer continues, the priest begins the process of bringing the sacred elements (bread and wine) to the altar table.

The second part of the service (the Great Entrance) begins when the sacred elements are taken from the niches and placed on the altar table. The priest takes the metal plate and the deacon takes the chalice and brings them to the altar table. The priest raises the plate towards the congregation at the level of his head. A short prayer is said and the deacon hands the chalice to the priest, who takes the chalice in his right hand and the metal plate in his left and places them both on the altar. He then carefully covers the sacred elements with a cloth. After various prayers, the priest leaves the altar for a short time, goes to the haykla and gives a cross and a Bible to the deacon. At the end of the Karozutha prayer, the deacon asks the congregation to bow their heads in a loud voice and the congregation complies. Then the priest comes to the altar and begins the hymn of the mysteries, which is repeated by those present at the altar. The priest kneels (matuniya) in all four corners of the bema. Matuniya is a distinctive feature that adds to the dramatic movements of the liturgy. He says the prayer of thanksgiving in the chant of the mysteries. The priest goes to the door of the altar, bows, straightens up and, with his hands extended upwards, reads the Nicene Creed in a loud voice. He then washes his hands. The deacon begins an appropriate karozutha prayer. The priest, standing in the center of the altar, approaches the altar table in three kneeling movements with his head bowed. When he reaches the altar table, he bows, straightens up and kisses the center of the altar. He repeats this action while kissing the right and left sides of the altar respectively. He bows once more in front of the altar table, straightens up and kisses the center, right and left sides of the altar once more. The process of bowing, rising and kissing continues with the deacons on the right side and then the deacons on the left side, accompanied by mutual prayers and the sign of the cross. The priest then descends from the slightly elevated platform in front of the altar table, faces the altar with the deacons and kneels to pray the karazutha. When the prayer

is over, he stands up and places the altar

kisses him. At this time he begins to recite a gehantha prayer in a low voice. He does not extend his hands towards the altar. However, in other gehantha prayers he may extend his hands towards the altar. At the beginning and end of each gehantha prayer he bows to the altar. There should also be a certain distance between him and the altar table. He should bow his head to his knees and kiss the center of the altar table at the end of each gehantha.

After this process, the anaphora of Mar Addai and Mar Mari begins. At the end of the previous gehantha prayer, the canona is said aloud. Then, in a low voice, the priest recites the first gehantha of the apostles, which contains expressions of thanksgiving to God. After reciting a canona, he makes the sign of the cross. This is followed by the greeting with the holy kiss. The following conversation takes place between the priest, deacon and congregation:

- Pastor: "Greetings".
- Congregation: "And peace be upon you and your souls".
- Deacon: "For the love of Jesus, give the greeting to another".
- Congregation: "To all Catholics (greetings)".
- Deacon: "Let us give thanks and supplicate".
- Pastor: "The grace of our Lord".
- Cermaat: "Amen".
- Pastor: "Lift up (elevate) your minds (souls) upwards".
- Congregation: "Toward you, O God".
- Pastor: "The sacrifice is offered to God, the Lord of all".
- Congregation: "He is worthy and true".
- Deacon "Peace be upon us".[200]

With the words "Give the greeting to someone else", the deacon kisses the priest's hands and receives the greeting by touching the joined hands of the priest, and

gives the greeting to someone else in the same way.

[200] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 15.

He bows, and then in this way the greeting is spread among the whole congregation. At this time the diptych (two-winged table), the roll of life and death, is read. This is followed by a karozutha prayer. The priest approaches the altar and makes only one bowing and kneeling gesture and begins to recite a kushapa prayer. During the prayer he carefully lifts the veil over the sacred elements and wraps it around the plate and chalice. At the moment of incense, he says, "As you have made me worthy of your body and blood, O Lord, so by your grace make me worthy to be trusted before you on the day of judgment."[201] He incenses the altar table with a long prayer. Accompanied by a canona, he makes the sign of the cross to the sacred elements and, kneeling down, recites a kushapa prayer. When the prayer is finished, he stands up and kisses the altar. The priest raises his hands in an orderly fashion, spreading them out to the sides and silently recites the following gehantha prayer:

> "Worthy of praise from every mouth and thanksgiving from every tongue is the beautiful and glorious name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, who out of His grace created the world and out of His love created its inhabitants [human beings], and out of His mercy ransomed mankind and redeemed them, and bestowed great grace on mortals. O my Lord, millions of worshipping celestial beings and countless angels and spirit beings glorify your name, along with the rulers of fire and spirit, the angels of the Cherubiyyin and the seraphim."[202]

After the above prayer, incense, sursum corda (lifting up the spirits) and kaddisha (holy/sanctus) are chanted, accompanied by a canon accompanied by the congregation. With the chanting of each kaddisha, the priest bows before the altar. He kneels down and recites a kushapa prayer. Then he silently recites the following gehantha prayer:

> "And we, O our Lord, even we, who are your humble and miserable and miserable servants, thank you with these heavenly powers. For you have performed for us a great unmerited favor by clothed us in our humanity in order to resurrect us with your divinity. And you have raised our bad status and corrected our fall. And you removed our mortality. And you forgave our offenses. And justified our sinfulness and enlightened our understanding. And you, O Lord our God, by the abundant mercy of your grace, defeated our enemies and gave victory to our inferior, weak nature."[203]

[201] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 16.
[202] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 17.
[203] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 18.

After the above prayer, the bell is rung and the whole congregation stands up, accompanied by a canona and the cry of qaddisha. The priest makes the sign of the cross to the sacred elements. At this time the deacon in the bema asks for a silent prayer. The priest kneels and silently recites a kushapa prayer. Then begins one of the most important stages of the liturgy, the invocation of the Holy Spirit, which includes the Eucharist and the epilepsy prayer. At the end of the kushapa prayer, the priest rises from his knees and silently recites the following gehantha prayers:

> "You, O Lord, in your unspeakable mercy make a solemn memorial for all the righteous and upright fathers who are blessed in your presence to remember the body and blood of your Christ, which we offer to you on the pure and holy altar, as you have taught us. And give us your peace and comfort all the days of the world."[204]

The congregation responds with an amen. Then he continues with the following prayer:

> "Let all the inhabitants of the earth know that you are one God, the true Father, who sent your Son and beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord and our God, in your life-giving Gospel you have taught us all the purity and holiness of the prophets, apostles, martyrs, bishops, priests, deacons and all the children of the holy catholic church, sealed with the holy sign of baptism."[205]

The priest makes the sign of the cross from bottom to top and from right to left, bowing down as he says the words "sealed one". Here he faces forward and says the Eucharistic prayer:

> "And we, O Lord (three times), your unworthy, humble and miserable servants, gathered in your presence and having received your example through tradition, celebrate, praise, glorify, commemorate and perform this great and majestic mystery of the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. "[206]

After this prayer, the prayer for the invocation (epilepsy) of the Holy Spirit begins.

> "And may Your Holy Spirit come (Neethi Mar Rukhaq Kaddisha), O Lord, dwell upon this sacrifice of Your servants, (the deacon says: "be silent") bless it and sanctify it, and may it [the sacrifice] be for us, O Lord, the forgiveness of trespasses, the remission of sins, the great hope of the resurrection from the dead, and the reward of new life in the heavenly kingdom with those who are pleasing in Your sight. And

[204] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 19.
[205] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 20.
[206] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 20.

> We thank you for this great and marvelous grace towards us, and we praise you without ceasing in your Church, redeemed by the precious blood of your Christ."[207]

As the priest says "come", he stands up and raises his hands. The deacon says, "Stand in silence and reverence and pray. Peace be upon us"[208] . A canon is recited and the priest makes the sign of the cross over the sacred elements. He bows towards the altar and offers incense with his right hand. At this time he recites a gehantha prayer of intercession for the dead and the fifty-first chapter of the Psalms is recited by the priest and the deacon. The deacon incenses the priest, the priest the altar and the deacon the congregation.

The breaking of the bread is then celebrated. Prayers are said between the priest and the deacon. The priest says, "Bless us, O Lord! The abundant mercy of your grace has brought us closer to these sublime, holy, life-giving and divine mysteries, even though we are not worthy"[209] Each time the word "brought us closer" is said, he makes the sign of the cross on his chest and kisses the center, right and left sides of the altar table. With both hands he takes the topmost bread (bukhra) on the metal plate and lifts it as high as he can. Looking at the bread, he says a prayer and kisses it symbolically in the sign of the cross and then says a prayer. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, he breaks the bread into two pieces, invisible to the onlookers. He places the piece in his left hand with the broken side facing the chalice. With the piece in his right hand he makes the sign of the cross from east to west and from north to south in the direction of the blood in the chalice. He dips a third of the piece of bread in his hand into the chalice. In the same way, he makes the sign of the cross with the piece of bread on the metal plate from east to west and from north to south. Then he grasps both pieces with both hands and holds them together as if they were unbroken. With his fingers he wraps the two pieces around the circle as if they were a single circle. Then he says a short prayer like this:

[207] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 21.
[208] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 21.
[209] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 23.

> "O Lord, may they [the holy elements] be for us the great hope of the forgiveness of trespasses, the remission of sins, the resurrection from the dead, and new life in the heavenly kingdom. To us, the holy Church of Christ our Lord, here, everywhere, now, always and forever."[210]

When the priest says the word "now", he makes a pause with his thumb on the blood-soaked place. Then he places the pieces on the metal plate, one above the other. The broken piece in his left hand is placed on the bottom and facing the chalice; the piece in his right hand is placed on top and facing the priest (west). The priest wipes his hands well and makes the sign of the cross with his thumb on his forehead and on the deacons around him. A mutual prayer (announcement) is recited between the priest and the deacon. The priest bows before the altar, straightens up and kisses the center of the altar. After a canon is read, the priest makes the sign of the cross to himself, raising his hands a little so that his fingers are visible. Although this sign of the cross is made for himself, the congregation understands that it is made for them. The deacon says a karozutha prayer. Meanwhile, the priest, who is still breaking the bread (the body), says a prayer and then dips the gemora (water) for the children. At this time, the deacon and the congregation mutually recite the karozutha prayer. At the end of the karozutha prayer, the priest recites a prayer and blesses the unconsecrated chalices. After the curtain is drawn over the altar, the curtain is opened again after some prayers. After a mutual prayer, the priest takes the deacon's hand and places the chalice on his hand. Here the canon called the bema is recited. The deacon comes to the priest, places a humeral shroud over his arms and places the metal plate with the bread on it. After a brief exchange of words, the priest receives communion. The other clergy and deacons receive communion at the same time. Then the deacon calls out to the congregation to receive communion. With the ringing of the bell, the people go to the altar to receive communion. The celebrant (priest or bishop) takes the plate and stands on the right side of the altar step. The deacon, meanwhile, stands on the left, holding the wine cup. To receive communion, first the men and then the women move in turn to the west side of

the altar. First, the liturgy

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[210] M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari*, 24.

They receive bread from the administrator and then wine from the deacon. When receiving communion, the congregation does not kneel, but stands. The celebrant places the bread in the mouth of the faithful. The deacon distributes the wine with a spoon, while the clergy take the wine directly from the chalice without using a spoon. After the distribution of communion, the priest and deacon return to their places at the altar. After some mutual prayers between the two, some Psalm passages (148 and 117) are recited between the priest and the deacon. The Lord's Prayer is said together. The priest turns to the west, moves towards the entrance of the altar and raises his right hand, which is holding a cross, and says the benediction (conclusion or Hutama), after which the curtain closes. After the congregation leaves, the priest and deacon wash the chalice and the metal plate used in the liturgy and conclude with a final blessing from the deacon, accompanied by some prayers.[211]

2.5. Forgiveness of sins and tawbah (Husaya)

Mar "Abdisho" considers this sacrament under the name of forgiveness of sins and repentance. According to him, the human species is prone to making mistakes and committing sins. It is rare that he is not tried by spiritual illnesses. It is for this reason that the healing priesthood has been given to give a remedy gratuitously. He gives as examples from the New Testament: "Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven",[212] "The sick need a physician, not the healthy" and "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance"[213] . In this parable, "Abdisho" refers to the three parables (mentioned by Christ) of the "Prodigal Son", the "Hundred Sheep" and the "Two Debtors", which are intended to strengthen the hope of sinners, to keep the door of heavenly repentance open and to give them heavenly happiness. Peter after his denial of Christ, Paul after his persecution, the sinful woman, the tax collector and

[211] The following sources were used for the practice of the Eucharist: Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 84-87; M. J. Birnie (Translation from Aramaic), *The Hallowing of Addai and Mari Disciplers of the East (The Anaphora of the Blessed Apostles)*, 1-34; Geltson, *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari*, 48-55.

[212] John, 20/23.
[213] Matthew, 9/12-13.

He presents the case of the thief on the cross as proof of this. According to him, when weak people, unable to accomplish everything, fall into error because of their nature, believers should come to the Christian health center (the church) and show their illnesses to spiritual doctors (clergy) in order to receive forgiveness of sins and spiritual health through the canons of repentance. After that, according to him, they participate in the Eucharist, purified.[214] From this it is understood that the sacrament of repentance and forgiveness of sins is part of the Eucharist. As a matter of fact, Mar Narsay included those who did not receive repentance among those who could not participate in the sacrifice of the Eucharist.[215] "Abdisho" quotes the following words from someone he calls a great master:

> "Our Lord has given the medicine of repentance to the wise doctors, the priests of the Church. Let anyone whom Satan has infected with the diseases of sin come and show his wounds to the disciples of the wise doctor who will heal him with spiritual medicine. This will not happen in a worldly way, but only when it is done in faith. Anything that is not based on faith is sinful, just as some do these holy things out of greed, worldly commerce and temporal gain."[216]

From the above statements, it is understood that the authority to forgive sins was given by Jesus Christ to his apostles and through them to the clergy. However, forgiveness of sins comes after repentance.

The "Taxa d'Husaya", one of the "Takhsa" (Taxa) books of the Eastern Church, which contains the liturgy and prayers, deals with the ministry of absolution and repentance.[217] The introductory paragraph of this text, prepared by Mar Isho "yab, states that this sacrament is to be used for those who have left the faith and then returned to it, who have eaten meat during the fasting season, on Fridays or Wednesdays, or who have committed offenses of any kind. The sacrament of absolution is a long ceremony and includes a long litany, which is not usually used. In the Psalms

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[214] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 24.
[215] Sako, *Abauna"-Syriac*, 115-116.
[216] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 24.
[217] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 36.

The fifty-first chapter and some priestly prayers make up the main service. Its content is repentance and forgiveness, and it begins with the following prayer of blessing: "O God, abundant in grace and mercy, shower upon these your servants the grace of the sweetness of your love and convert them to a life of repentance with the hope of renewal."[218] This ceremony takes place during the celebration of the sacraments. However, on Holy Saturday (the day before Easter) it is obligatory. If the sin is intentional, without free will and without any valid reason, then the anointing oil is also necessary. The sign of the cross with the formula N is made, renewed, sealed and purified in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As already mentioned, the forgiveness of sins and the sacrament of repentance were performed as a separate rite before the Eucharist.[219] Badger reports that it took place on communion day before the beginning of the morning prayers.[220] Nowadays, it takes place just before the distribution of the sacred elements in the Eucharist or immediately after the sermon.[221] Before the fourteenth century, however, this ceremony took place on the evening before Eucharistic Sunday. It was a general confession of sin, not just a secret confession to the priest.[222] In this respect, according to the tradition of the Eastern Church, those who had committed major sins would publicly confess and repent in the church in the presence of the faithful. Ordinary minor sins were believed to be absolved in the context of the rituals of purification that took place during the Ashai Rabbi service.[223]

2.6. Holy Maya (Malka)

Holy leaven is a sacrament unique to the Eastern Church tradition and is not found in other churches. Malka is the Syriac word for king, kingdom and holy yeast,

[218] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 37.
[219] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 38.
[220] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/155.
[221] Mar Aprem, Sacraments of the Church of the East, 38.
[222] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 62.
[223] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 24, footnote 105.

It means leavened dough or leavened bread.[224] Although Badger and other experts like him consider the inclusion of the Malka in the list of sacraments a strange choice,[225] it is rigorously preserved in the liturgy of the Eastern Church. According to the Church, because of the antiquity of this sacramental practice, its origin is hidden in the memory of the apostolic church tradition and has been practiced since time immemorial. It is held in high esteem because of its direct connection with the Eucharist, which Jesus Christ first instituted and celebrated at the Last Supper.[226] The tradition of the Eastern Church is based on the New Testament passage "Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman mixes into three measures of flour. In the end, all the dough rises."[227] In line with the use of leaven as a metaphor for the heavenly angelic realm, the Eastern Church tradition has an understanding of leaven (khmira) that comes through the apostolic tradition for each of the basic rites of initiation, eucharist and baptism. The main function of this leaven is to connect these two sacramental acts performed in the Church to Jesus Christ, the first founder of these two mysteries, and to make these two sacramental blessings perfect (sumlaya). Just as the holy oil, called the oil of the apostles, serves as a leaven for the sacrament of baptism and perfects it, in the same way, malka (holy leaven) serves as a leaven for the sacrament of the Eucharist, by means of which the Eucharistic bread is sealed, confirmed and perfected. The function of both types of leaven is sealing and perfecting or making complete. The former is related to the sacrament of baptism and the latter to the sacrament of the Eucharist, both of which are handed over to the Church through the apostolic tradition.

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[224] Mar Awa Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā) In The Assyrian Church Of The East", in *The Anaphoral Genesis of the Institution Narrative in Light of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari*, ed: Cesare Giraudo, Acts of the International Liturgy Congress, Rome 25-26 October 2011, OCA 295 (Rome, 2013), 363-364; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 38.
[225] According to Badger, this practice appeared at the earliest in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries. Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/161.
[226] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 363.
[227] Matthew, 13/33; Luke, 13/20-21.

in the sacrament of the Eucharist.[228] Holy yeast was also thought to replace the foundation narrative in the Eucharist.[229]

The earliest written documentation of the existence of the sacred leaven (malka) dates back to the liturgical canons of Patriarch John V (900-905). However, this does not mean that this practice did not exist before that. In the fifteenth canon, the following is said about the malka: "Those who make the dough (khmira) for the sacred bread (qsatha) to be baked keep two leaven, one consecrated and one ordinary. But the blessed one is essential for the bread. These things are so by the word of our Lord."[230] In this first reference to malka, it is referred to as holy yeast or dough. The use of the term malka in reference to the Eucharistic bread is also found in the ninth canon of the same document: "It is not fitting that any of the priests and deacons who preside over the altar should make bread of dark wheat flour dough, even though there is a king (malka), thus making the king (malka) an enslaved Ethiopian servant. Rather, he is a white Roman, and this is according to the word of our Lord."[231] These statements imply that the Eucharistic bread will be made of pure white wheat flour. The canons attributed to Gewargis, the metropolitan of Erbil (938-960), also mention holy leaven in the following terms:

> "I have seen church workers kneading dough (qsatha) with unholy (profane) yeast in the evening. At the night service they take half of the dough and bake the bread in an unholy way [without adding holy yeast], and they seal the other half of the dough with holy yeast, consecrate it, bake it, and take it to the altar. They claim as an excuse that they give the unholy bread to pagans and to children who are negligent in handling it and pouring out the crumbs."[232]

The most complete account of the Malka tradition is based on the writings of John bar Zo "bi in the early eighteenth century. According to this, Jesus Christ

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[228] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 367-368.
[229] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 376.
[230] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 364-365.
[231] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 365
[232] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 365.

At the Last Supper he gave one piece of Passover bread to each of his disciples and two pieces to his beloved disciple John, the son of Zebedee. John ate one of these pieces and kept the other piece for leaven. When the Jews caught Jesus Christ to crucify Him, the disciples were afraid and hid and John was left alone. When Jesus Christ was crucified, John was there to see what his end would be. Zo "bi quotes the following sentences from the New Testament:

> "The Jewish authorities asked Pilate to break the legs of those crucified and to remove the bodies. They did not want the bodies to remain on the cross on the Sabbath because it was the Preparation Day. Because that Sabbath was the great feast day. So the soldiers went and broke the legs of the first man and then the other man who was crucified with Jesus. When they came to Jesus, they saw that He was dead. So they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear. Immediately blood and water flowed from His side. The man who saw this is a witness and his testimony is true. He knows he is telling the truth. He has testified so that you may believe."[233]

According to Zo "bi, the blood is a symbol of the mystery of the body and blood (eucharist) present in the church and the water is a sign of the rebirth of believers. He goes on to say that when John was alone there, he saw the blood and water flowing and took the drops of blood with the piece of Passover bread that he had set aside earlier. According to him, John had taken the water of baptism, which had been given to him in a vessel by John. Zo "bi says that John mixed the blood that flowed from the body with the bread, which he called the body of Jesus Christ, and mixed the water from his side with the water f r o m his baptism. According to him, after his ascension, Jesus Christ ordered his apostles to place the leaven from his body in the churches for the mysteries of the Eucharist and baptism. When the Apostles gathered together to scatter to different regions for missionary purposes, they divided this leaven among themselves. They took pure olive oil, mixed it with the water in the vessel and divided it among themselves, distributing it among the horns according to their own situation, to be the leaven for baptism. From the side of Christ

[233] John, 19/31-36.

They pulverized the piece of bread soaked in the flowing blood, mixed it with wheat flour and salt, and divided it among themselves, dividing it into vessels to be a leaven for the body and blood of Christ.[234]

According to "Abdisho" bar Brikha, who includes the sacrament in the list of sacraments, the sacred leaven (malka) was delivered to all the churches of the East by the holy apostles who brought the gospel to the East, Thomas and Bartholomew of the twelve, and Addai and Mari of the seventy, and is kept for use in the sacrament of the mystery of the body (eucharist) until the coming of Christ again. Regarding the absence of this sacrament in other churches, he says the following:

> "Some Christians may object, saying: How is it that the above-mentioned apostles handed over the leaven to those in the East, when Peter, the head of the apostles, and his companions did not hand it over to the West? If what you say is true, one of two things must be true: either the apostles did not agree on the way to spread the Gospel, or your tradition is not authentic. We answer their objection in the following way: From the day the apostles spread the Gospel to the present day, the Orientals have kept the apostolic canons as a priceless relic with the true faith, without any change or alteration. Although they were under the yoke and persecution of foreign powers, they never changed their faith or modified their canons. Those who are knowledgeable in such matters know very well that the preservation of these canons, and especially of the sacred leaven, requires great effort and care in oppressive lands where there is neither a ruler to help them (Christians) nor any commander to support and protect them, but rather they are constantly oppressed, weakened and tortured. If this sacred leaven were not rooted in the apostolic tradition, they would not have endured all these persecutions and tribulations to preserve it along with the orthodox faith. As for their objection to Patrus and the great apostles who brought the gospel to the West, we reply as follows: They [the apostles] delivered it to them in the same way. However, with the changes they made to the faith, the remaining canons were corrupted under the rule of the heretical kings. The evidence for the truth of this statement is this: If they had all received the apostolic tradition, the Franks [Roman Catholics] would not have used an unleavened sacrifice and the Romans [Greek Orthodox] would not have used a leavened one. Because the apostles did not deliver it in two different ways. Therefore, it is the Westerners, not the Easterners, who have accepted the conversion of faith and canons."[235]

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[234] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 369; Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/152-153.
[235] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 23.

As can be seen from the above statements, "Abdisho" states that this sacrament is of apostolic origin and attributes its ignorance by Westerners to the corruption of the true faith and canons, especially under the leadership of Christian heretical kings. Moreover, according to the tradition of the Eastern Church, when Nestorius had to leave Constantinople, he took all the sacramental leaven with him and deprived the rest of the Christian world of it. Thus, only the Nestorians had the right to the leaven.[236]

There are two ceremonies related to the practice of sacred leaven: "the ceremony of renewing the malka", which is the process of multiplying the sacred leaven, and "Takhsa d-Suba "tha", which is the ceremony of adding the sacred leaven to the dough to be used for the Eucharistic bread. The data on the first ceremony dates to an earlier period than the other. The renewal ceremony is performed with great solemnity on Holy Thursday before Easter, before the washing of the feet. Many priests and deacons participate in this once a year ceremony. The Mass is usually celebrated by the parish priest in the same room where the Eucharistic bread is baked. First, the priest prepares the finely sifted fine white flour (two-thirds of the whole mixture), the finest and most beautiful pure white salt (one-third of the whole portion), a few drops of pure olive oil and three drops of water to be poured over the mixture. These ingredients are also used in the evharistic bread dough. These ingredients are kneaded together with the recitation of some Psalm passages (chapters 82 to 86) and various prayers. The holy leaven from the previous Holy Thursday, kept in the altar, is brought to the beth gazzah with candles, incense, etc. and mixed with the new leaven. Thus it is sealed, blessed, mixed and renewed with the holy and ancient leaven of Jesus Christ. The renewed and multiplied leaven is then placed in the vessel and r e t u r n e d to its place on the altar. The priest prepares the leaven for the Eucharist on Holy Thursday.

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[236] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 41.

He seals the dough with the new leaven and concludes the ceremony with certain prayers. Once the dough has been sealed with the leaven, it may not be given to unbelievers or even to a Christian child. Once the dough has been consecrated, it is to be used exclusively for the Eucharistic bread and is not to be removed from the church under any circumstances. According to tradition, the sacred leaven is one of the conditions for the validity of the Eucharist. The second ceremony, called "Takhsa d-Suba "tha", is the consecration (sealing) of the dough, which is to be baked and transformed into Eucharistic bread during the preparation of the Eucharistic bread, with holy leaven kept in a vessel on the altar of the church. When the priest prepares to bake the fresh Eucharistic bread on the morning of each sacrifice, he reads the words of Psalms (145/1-6) and removes the vessel containing the leaven. He then blesses the dough with the malka (yeast) in two parts. First, the main body of the dough is blessed with the malka in the shape of a cross. At this point the priest recites the following prayer: "This dough is sealed and blessed with the ancient and holy leaven of our Lord Jesus Christ, given and transmitted by our holy fathers Mar Addai, Mar Mari and the Apostle Mar Thomas, the heralds of the Eastern region; in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."[237] The priest then blesses (seals) a smaller piece of dough taken from the center of the dough and used to form the actual bread or malkayta. As the priest blesses it, he says: "This broken piece is sealed and blessed with this holy leaven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."[238] He then returns the container of leaven to the altar with the Psalms 24/1-6; 33/12; 24/9-10. He then proceeds to mix the holy leaven into the dough and to shape and bake the eucharistic bread according to the prescribed ritual. The continuity of the sacrifice (eucharist) is maintained by the addition of a small portion of the sacred leaven (malka). Holy yeast, because it is salted

[237] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 376-377.
[238] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 377.

very little salt is added. The holy yeast is mixed only the next morning, just before the bread is baked.[239]

2.7. The Sign of the Life-Giving Cross

The last sacrament of the Eastern Church is the sign of the life-giving cross, which is unique to this Church. This sacrament is practiced instead of the sacrament of marriage, which is not considered a sacrament by the Church. It is important to note that this does not diminish the importance of the marriage ceremony.[240] Although "Abdisho" bar Brikha includes this sacrament in his list of the sacraments of the Church, he treats it in a separate section under the heading "On prostration to the cross of the Lord" in the section on the symbolism of the afterlife.[241] Badger thinks that "Abdisho" added it to the list of sacraments because the sign of the cross is obligatory in the prayers of the priests in all sacraments.[242] According to "Abdisho", the sign of the life-giving cross is the permanent guardian of Christians and the one that confirms and perfects all the other sacraments.[243] The sign of the cross has been a subject of debate between Muslims and Christians since the early Islamic period. Muslims disapproved of the prostration and veneration of the sign of the cross, and Christians, in response, tried to show that it could not be seen as an idolatrous practice. As a matter of fact, this issue came up in the debate between the Abbasid Caliph Mahdi and Catholicos Timotheos I. In response to Caliph Mahdi's question, "Why do you prostrate to the cross?" the Catholicos replied: "Because it is the cause of life". When asked, "But didn't the cross (Christ) become the cause of death?", the Catholicos replied: "The human nature of Christ died on it. But in reality it was the cause of his resurrection from the dead. The cross is the cause of life and the cause of death.

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[239] Royel, "The Sacrament Of The Holy Leaven (Malkā)", 380, 382-383; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 39-41.
[240] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 41.
[241] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19, 25.
[242] Badger, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2/162.
[243] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19.

is the absence of death. Through prostration we prostrate to God, who opens for us the door to the source of life and the absence of death."[244]

"According to Abdisho, Christians prostrate themselves to the body of Christ because God is in him. In the same way, prostration to the cross is prostration to Jesus Christ, their savior. According to him, because the cross is the name of Christ. As is well known, the word salib is the noun meful of the verb "slb" (to crucify) and refers to the masluba (the crucified one), that is, the Messiah. According to "Abdisho", this is just like the word ketil (killed) and sajid (prostrated). Therefore, according to him, the term salib (cross) cannot refer to the cross made of wood, silver and copper.[245] After stating that the fundamental basis of Christianity is based on the belief that the renewal and salvation of the world is achieved through the cross, "Abdisho" continues as follows:

> "In it we see the sign of our Savior, who will be manifested before his manifestation in heaven, as it is said. Therefore, every time we look at the sign of our salvation, we contemplate it deeply in relation to the understanding of our religion and the renewal of all creation. Therefore, we must offer a passionate prostration of thanksgiving, not for the material elements [in the sign of the cross], but for the one who is stretched out on it [Christ], and above all for God who gave His Son to be crucified for us. It is through his cross that we have undeservedly received regeneration, salvation and eternal life in the heavenly kingdom, "for when we were enemies of God, he made peace with us through the death of his Son".[246] The holy apostles performed many miracles with this sign [of the cross]. With it they completed and perfected the sacraments and other mysteries of the Church. It has been handed down by tradition to those who came after them. In the same way, they have taught us this: "The word of the cross is nonsense for those who are perishing, but for us who are being saved it is the power of God."[247]

The cross is almost the only glorified object in the Eastern Church. For this reason, the Eastern Church does not use statues and pictures of Christ crucified. However, the sign of the cross is kissed and venerated in churches and homes. There is a separate festival for the cross on September 26 (September 13 in Greek reckoning) to commemorate the discovery of the cross. In Hudra, there is a long ceremony related to this day. In the Eastern Church, it is celebrated inside the church, in church buildings.

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[244] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 46-47.
[245] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 19.

[246] Romans, 5/10.
[247] 1 Corinthians, 1/18; Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 26.

The cross is placed at the top, inside the altar and on a table called "sxinta" which is placed near the altar door in the main hall of the church (haykla) so that it can be kissed comfortably by those who come to the church for worship. Nestorians also place a cross on the east wall of the first room in their homes. However, they do not keep statues or pictures of Jesus on the cross or crucifix.[248]

3. OTHER IMPORTANT RITUALS OF THE NESTURIAN CHURCH

The Nestorian Church has many different and important rituals other than the religious practices mentioned above. As a matter of fact, "Abdisho" bar Brikha, in his work *al-Jawhar*, after the chapter on the sacraments, in a separate chapter titled "signs symbolizing the afterlife", discusses various topics such as prostration towards the east, prostration to the cross of the Lord, Sunday and the feasts of the Lord, Friday, fasting, prayer, almsgiving and the zunic. Although he mentions the sacrament of the sign of the cross by name in the list of sacraments in the section on sacraments, he discusses it in the section on signs symbolizing the afterlife. On the other hand, the topic of marriage and virginity is dealt with in the section on sacraments.[249]

3.1. Marriage and Chastity

Although marriage is not listed among the seven sacraments, the fact that "Abdişo" deals with this subject in the section on sacraments shows how important this subject was considered by the church. "Abdisho" states that marriage, which takes place according to Christian law, which aims to serve the family and the spouse and to raise children in the fear of God unceasingly, and which prevents the evil eye from looking at the possessions of others, is called a "holy act" by the scriptures. He urges everyone to respect and honor marriage.

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[248] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 43-44.
[249] See Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 24-26.

not to defile his bed with sin.[250] Referring to Paul's statement, "This mystery is great. I say this about Christ and his church"[251] , referring to Paul's statement that marriage is a mystery (sacrament) symbolizing heavenly acts. He cites the New Testament passage, "He who divorces his wife for any other reason than fornication commits adultery. And he who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."[252] Referring to the New Testament, he states that divorce is not permissible except in cases of adultery, or in three cases related to the soul, such as magic, blasphemy, and murder, or for a bodily cause. Addressing the issue of virginity (not marrying) after marriage, "Abdişo" quotes Paul's sentence "I have not received a commandment from the Lord concerning them"[253] and says that the commandment of the Lord is in favor of marriage. He goes on to say that it is permissible for someone who wants to take the path of preserving his chastity (virginity), that is, for someone who wants to follow the example of the baptizer and savior (Christ), Elijah and Paul. According to him, this should be considered a license, not a divine command. "According to Abdisho, this license entails not mixing with society, not continuing to trade with them, and not residing in villages and cities, which are sources of evil, provided that marriage is not considered an immoral and unclean act. This is because the yoke of marriage is heavy and the responsibilities are many. Therefore, engaging in the affairs of this world will corrupt the clarity of the soul. According to him, a person who does not act like a spiritual angel in practice and theory despite taking a vow of virginity is inferior in rank to a person of weak faith among the common people outside the clergy. Therefore, the mujtahid must keep his nafs away from everything.[254]

[250] Hebrews, 13/4.
[251] Ephesians, 5/32.
[252] Matthew, 5/32.

[253] 1 Corinthians 7/25.
[254] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 24-25.

3.2. Prostrating towards the East

As mentioned earlier, the churches of the Eastern Church were built with their altars facing east and the clergy performed religious ceremonies facing east. The fact that the Nestorians turned towards the east instead of Jerusalem as their qibla did not escape the attention of the Muslims. As a matter of fact, Caliph Mahdi posed a question to Catholicos Timotheos I: "Did Christ pray and prostrate himself towards Jerusalem during his lifetime?". In response to this question, the Catholicos replied: "Yes, that is true", Caliph Mahdi felt the need to ask, "Then why do you prostrate towards the east?". In response, the Catholicos said, "The heaven on earth is a symbol of the heaven in the sky. Since the heaven on earth is in the east, that is where we prostrate ourselves."[255] According to "Abdisho" bar Brikha, prostration towards the east is an apostolic canon and is related to the covenant of the Lord. Referring to the New Testament passages, "For the coming of the Son of Man will be like lightning, which is seen from every side, from the east to the west"[256] and "Neither man nor the angels in heaven know that day or that hour"[257] , he states that one should always be alert and look toward the east, where he will appear. According to him, two results are achieved by turning towards the east. First, it reminds us of the Hereafter and helps us avoid sins. Secondly, it reminds us of our original homeland, the paradise in the east, from which we were expelled because of the sin we committed. Therefore, we need to seek refuge in repentance. In relation to this canon, "Abdisho" refers to the tradition of Mar Efrem. According to this, when the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary from the east and greeted her, "Hail, full of grace," she prostrated herself towards the east. When the Lord (the Messiah) ascended into heaven, his face was towards the east, and he will return in the same way on the Day of Judgment. The apostles according to "Abdisho",

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[255] Sako, *Hivârat Mesihiyye-Islâmîyye*, 39.
[256] Matthew, 24/27.
[257] Mark, 13/32.

When they saw the ascension of the Messiah, they prostrated towards the east. In this regard, he cites the views of the early commentators on the interpretation of the sentence "Jesus, who was taken up from among you, will come back in the same way as you saw him ascend into heaven"[258] . According to this, on the first day, the seven natures were created silently and then a loud voice said, "Let there be light". When the angels, who did not know that they had a creator until then, heard this word, they decided that the owner of this voice was the creator of themselves and of everything, if this word was actually realized. When the creation of light actually took place following this word, then all the angels prostrated towards the east.[259] The Eastern Church attaches great importance to this canon because of the information transmitted by tradition about prostration towards the east.

3.3. Sunday, the Feasts of the Lord and Friday

In the Nestorian Church there are important days and holidays that are considered sacred. One of the most important of these is Sunday. According to "Abdisho", keeping Sunday is an apostolic canon. Because on this great day, Jesus Christ was resurrected and all creation was comforted by his resurrection. According to him, Christ bore true witness with his own soul to the general resurrection and eternal life. Just as the only begotten Son was resurrected on Sunday, so will human beings be resurrected on Sunday. According to "Abdisho", since such glorious events take place on Sunday, it is necessary to respect this day. Because on the Day of Judgment, all worldly affairs will be canceled and everything will return to the glory of God and the blessings of His ineffable mysteries. For this reason, the Christian apostles gave Sunday as a day off from all worldly affairs and commanded them to keep praying to God, reading the Bible and meditating on God's design. "Abdisho", here

[258] Acts, 1/11.
[259] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 25-26.

Pointing to the biblical passages that are read during religious ceremonies, he notes that they first read the books of the prophets in the Old Testament, which are the basis and introduction to understanding the truth of the divine providence (mdabbranutha) realized in the Messiah. For every person who wants to perfect what is imperfect, and this is his goal, replaces what is imperfect and deficient with what is perfect. Therefore, one who has received his testimony from him cannot be incomplete and futile, and he says that in the New Testament, "You are examining the Bible, in which you believe that there is eternal life for you. It (the Bible) bears witness for me that the Father has sent me"[260] . According to him, this is why the apostles commanded that the books of the prophets be read first and then the Bible as a conclusion. "Abdisho" states that we continue to do the same things every Sunday as a constant reminder of the Day of Judgment when we will be rewarded according to our deeds. According to him, this action prevents us from sinning and encourages us to do good deeds. This practice is also practiced on holidays attributed to divine providence (mdabbranutha). Finally, "Abdisho" states that the Church celebrates them continuously throughout the year so that the graces bestowed upon the creatures by the appearance of Christ do not fade with time, are not lost in the depths of heresy, and their goodness does not disappear.[261]

Regarding Friday, "Abdişo" states that this day is known as the sixth day because the sun set on that day during the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. According to him, Friday means "arubeta" in Syriac, which means guruub, and because of the misdemeanor called "Friday" committed by the Jews, the whole creation was plunged into darkness and the universe was filled with sorrow. "The sun was darkened in the sky, the earth was shaken, the curtain of the sanctuary was torn, and the rocks were split."[262] "Abdisho" related Mar Efrem

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[260] John, 5/39.
[261] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 27.
[262] Matthew, 27/51.

He cites various views based on tradition. Accordingly, out of respect for the body of Jesus Christ lying on the cross, wild animals and birds did not eat meat or touch the corpses on that day, and for this reason the apostles laid down the canon for Christians to abstain from eating meat on Fridays and Wednesdays. Because on that day, the Jews conspired to kill Jesus Christ and made an alliance with Judas Iscodiriot, putting a price on his immaculate blood. "Abdisho" offers other reasons for Friday that are also found in the canons. According to this, Friday is actually a day of mourning for the whole people. For on that day, because of Adam's original sin, death overtook our nature and he was cast out of paradise to this cursed earth. Also on Friday, in the time of Noah, the flood destroyed mankind, and after Jesus' forty days of fasting in the desert (the time of suffering), Satan's battle with him was completed.[263]

3.4. Zünnar

From the Greek word "zone", zünnar is a Syriac word. It is a honey-colored piece of cloth wrapped around the belt. It was used especially by Christian and Magian monks.[264] As mentioned earlier, it was first made compulsory in the Eastern Church by Catholicos Marameh (646-649) during his episcopate in Mosul. According to "Abdişo", an important symbol of Christians is the zünnar. According to him, the zunic, which Christians wear during prayer, signifies being prepared for service before the Lord and being at His command, just as a soldier does before a king on earth. The use of the zunic in both the New Testament and the Old Testament is a divine command. In the Old Testament, the Levitical priests were commanded to wear a girdle (zunnar) along with other clerical costumes. In the New Testament they are commanded ʇo wear a girdle (zunnar) along with other clerical costumes.

[263] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 27-28.
[264] Yusuf Shawki Yavuz, "Zünnâr", *DİA* (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 2013), 44/572-573.

Be like slaves. Be like slaves who are ready to open the door when their masters return from a wedding feast and knock on the door."[265] "Abdişo" emphasizes that John the Baptist also wore a sash made of camel's hair and also relates the following story about Paul: "The prophet Hagabos appeared. He took Paul's girdle. He bound himself with it."[266] According to "Abdisho", the zunnar is used for three reasons. First, the slaves and soldiers of kings receive a girdle as a sign of obedience and service. Secondly, it was commanded by the Messiah as a sign of alertness of mind, clarity of thought, and waiting for the portion of the banquet to be raised. Thirdly, it signifies death, as expressed in the New Testament in the sentence "They will bind you and take you where you do not want to go"[267] . "Abdisho explains the meaning of zünar in the following words: "Surely travelers tie their waist tightly on the road. In the same way, we are travelers, we are not permanent. Because our days have begun to move in a way that we cannot keep up with. We must acquire things that will benefit us in the afterlife. Through its use, the zunnar teaches us true faith and righteous deeds."[268]

4. LITERATURE BOOKS

In the Eastern Church, the main liturgical book containing texts on the anaphora, liturgical prayers, daily prayers, and other religious ceremonies is the Hudra, which means "cycle, cycle". This name in itself contains many texts. The Eastern Church manuscript tradition always uses the name "Khudra d- Madabranutha" for this collection, referring to the entire liturgical year as the celebration of the divine incarnation (mdabbranutha) or salvation incarnation, conceived by God the Father and realized in His Son Jesus Christ.[269] According to the tradition of the Church of the East, the Syriac liturgy (Hudra) was founded by Catholicos Isho'yab III (649-659) and his colleague "Ananisho".

[265] Luke, 12/35-36.
[266] Acts, 21/11.
[267] John, 21/18.

[268] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 29.
[269] Mar Awa Royal, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 2-3.

by the monks of the Upper Monastery near Mosul. The main formulas for liturgical prayer are the Hudra, Gazza and Kashkul, which were formulated and edited in the Upper Monastery near Mosul.[270] The oldest Syriac manuscript copy of the Hudra

This is the copy dated to the Xth century.[271] However, various fragments of the Hudra are also found in a collection of Syriac and Sogdian Christian manuscripts in Turfan, which predates this copy by about a hundred years.[272] Not much is known about the early period of the formulas contained in the Hudra before the VIIth century. Apart from the book itself, the earliest references to the Hudra are made by Toma al-Merci[273] , who lived in the VIII and IXth centuries, and by a work dating to the IXth or Xth century and attributed to Gewargis of Arbela (Pseudo Gewargis of Arbela)[274] . This latter work mentions several times the Penqitha made by Isho'yab III. Similarly, "Abdisho" bar Brikha also mentions the Penqitha of Isho'yab III. As is well known, the Penqitha is the liturgical book of the Western Assyrians. From these references, it is clear that Penqitha and Hudra are the same. In this case, from the cryptological debates until the liturgical reforms of Isho "yab III, it seems that the East Assyrians referred to Hudra by the name Penqitha, which was used by the West Assyrians. Probably because of their conflicts with the West Assyrians, they felt the need to change the name Penqitha and called it Hudra.[275]

The liturgical texts of the Eastern Church include the texts used in liturgy and religious services, daily prayers, and the relevant parts of the Bible that are read as lessons on special days and periods of the church year. The Church's liturgical texts and daily prayers have been revised and reorganized over time.

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[270] Toma al-Marji, *Kitab al-Ruesa*, 75-76.
[271] William F. Macomber, "A List of the Known Manuscripts of the Chaldean Hudra", *OCP* 36/1 (Rome, 1970), 120-134; "The Oldest Known Text of the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari", 341-343.
[272] Royal, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 3, footnote 9.
[273] Toma al-Marji, *Kitab al-Ruesa*, 75-76.
[274]For this work, which contains important comments on the liturgical rites attributed to Gewargis of Erbilli, cf.
R. H. Connolly (ed. & ET) *A Commentary on the Mass by the Nestorian George, Bishop of Mosul and Arbela*, ed. by Robert Matheus (Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, 2000).
[275] Royal, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 3-5.

with additions to the liturgy. Shem "un bar Sabbai (d. 341) is considered the first liturgical reformer of the Eastern Church, who divided the choir into two groups.[276] He divided the twelve days of the church's daily liturgy, excluding Sunday, into two weeks, or two choirs, the upper choir on the right side of the chancel (sahin) and the lower choir on the left side of the chancel, depending on whether the first or second choir began the service. According to this practice for evening ceremonies, each of these weeks is called before (qdam) or after (athar), and there is a separate evening ceremony for each day of each of these two weeks. According to the chapter titles in the Hudra, this change occurs every other Sunday. Each Sunday, according to the chapter title, the next week's qdam or athar is determined, and so the book containing the chapters of the daily ceremonies is called *Ktābā da-qdām wad-bāthar*. Each week one of these choirs begins the ceremony. The upper choir, if it falls before (qdam), on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and the lower choir on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, recite the prayers of the service in makam.[277] Another early reform involving the unification of the liturgical traditions of the Church is found in the synod organized by Mar Isaac and Mar Mar Marutha in 410. This synod adopted the liturgy and ecclesiastical calendar current in the West. The thirteenth canon of the synod deals with the regulations and canons concerning the liturgy, sacraments and feasts of Christ, and states that the Church of Ctesiphon-Seleucia was to be based on the Western liturgy as practiced by Mar Isaac and Mar Mar Marutha. The deacons in each city will proclaim the litany read here, and the lessons from the Bible will be read as shown here. In all the churches, sacrifices will be offered on a single altar and the old practices will be abandoned. On Epiphany and Easter, Mar Isaac and

It will be celebrated together as Mar Marutha taught. Nativity (Yalda), forty-day fast

[276] Bar Habreus, *al-Târihu "l-Kenise*, 2/7. Since the information on this subject is based on a late work, it should be treated with caution.

[277] For detailed information, see Arthur J. Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices*, translated from the Syriac with Introduction, notes, and indices and an appendix containing the lectionary and glossary (London: Rivington, Percival & CO., 1894), 1-67. See also Albayrak, *Chaldeans and Nestorians*, 153-157.

(Lent) and the great day of unleavened bread are to be celebrated according to the calendar on which the Western and Eastern Churches are united. The fifteenth canon also mentions various rules for the clergy regarding the liturgy, the sacraments and the liturgy to be applied in daily worship.[278] In 676, the fifteenth canon of the synod organized by Catholicos Gewargis I. also requires the faithful to come to the church for daily morning and evening prayers and to recite these prayers collectively. Because praying at home or in private chapels is not considered sufficient.[279] The cathedral-style liturgy developed in Kokhe Cathedral, the cathedral of the Catholicosate, and the monastic-style liturgy developed in the monasteries of Upper Monastery and Beth "Abe in Mosul.[280]

> The liturgy of the Eastern Church, and by extension the liturgical year, is mainly based on the Catholicos

III. It is the result of the compilation and reforms carried out by Isho "yab. Isho "yab III was a monk at the Monastery of Beth "Abe, bishop of Nineveh in 629, metropolitan of Erbil about ten years later, and finally catholicos in 649.[281] With the help of the monk "Ananisho" from Erbil, Iso'yab III compiled the Hudra in 650/651 in order to establish the liturgical rite and tradition precisely, and established rules for the use of an original and sophisticated lectionary[282] . During his catholicosate he tried to combine cathedral and monastic forms of liturgy. He collected all the existing cathedral and monastic manuscripts known as Hudra, Gazza and Kashkul, and then reorganized them into a single system, eliminating all major differences in the lectionary system for cathedral and monastic commemorations and adding some appropriate parts for the use of the Eucharistic celebration. The Hudra of Isho "yab III includes Ramsa (evening prayers), Lelya (night

[278] *Synodicon Orientale,* 266- 267.
[279] *Synodicon Orientale*, 488.
[280] Jincy, O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 4.
[281] Sebastian P. Brock, "Ishoʿyahb III of Adiabene", *GEDSH*, 218.
[282] The lectionary system is a fixed order of scripture readings for use in the liturgy on particular days of

the church year. The main factor in determining the passages to be read in the lectionary is the appropriateness of these passages for particular days and periods of the church year. See Pauly Kannokadan, *The East Syrian Lectionary: A Historical-Liturgical Study* (Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam, 1991), 1.

prayers), Sapra (morning prayers), the "Onita d-Bema" (communion hymn), the "Onita d-Raze" (hymn of the mysteries sung during the offering of the sacrifice) and the "Onita d-Kanke" (hymn sung just before the passage from the altar to the bema), and Bible lessons appropriate for the holy sacrifice. Famous liturgical refrains and madrasas (doctrinal hymns) are also attributed to him. He also laid down rules for daily worship, organizing the monastic and cathedral cycles, which have been preserved to this day.[283] The liturgical texts of the Eastern Church were shaped as a result of the many compositions attributed to the Syriac fathers and their various authors. In this regard, it includes many compositions attributed to early fathers such as Mar Efrem, Jacob bishop of Nusaybin, Catholicos Mar Shem "un bar Sabbai, Marutha of Meyafarkin, Mar Narsay, Mar Aba and Babai the Great. Of these, Mar Efrem'im's compositions are the main source of the Hudra, and his poems are used extensively in daily prayers. However, while the Syriac Orthodox prayer book, Penqitho, contains a large number of "madrasas" attributed to Mar Efrem, Hudra is restricted to a limited number of triple stanzas. Many hymns by the famous Western Syriac poet Jacob of Suruc were also included in the prayer book. Mar Narsay contributed to the liturgy with a number of chrysological and soteriological prayers. His literary legacy includes a number of liturgical compositions such as the buyaye, turgame, tesbohta and karozutha. Mar Aba added to the liturgy the anaphora of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius, and he is also known to have written many memra (poems in verse), turgame and kanona. The famous tesbohta of Babai the Great was also included in the liturgy and shaped many prayers in daily worship. Catholicos Elia I (1028-1049) composed several prayers recited at the Eucharist. The texts of Catholicos Elia III Abu Halim (d. 1190) include many prayers attributed to Paul of Anbar (d.740-741) and Sallitha of Reshnaena. Likewise, the texts of Gewargis Warda include prayers attributed to Suleiman of Basra and Catholicos Sallitha II.

[283] Jincy, O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 5-6.

There are many compositions attributed to Yahballaha (1190- 1122). "Abdisho" bar Brikha also contributed to the liturgical texts.[284] The liturgy was further enriched by the addition of hymns by Khamis bar Kardah (Qardahe), who lived at the same time as Gewargis Warda.[285] When the Eastern Church calendar and lectionary system is compared with the Jerusalem calendar and lectionary system, the oldest system in terms of calendar and lectionary, there are important parallels between the lectionary and the commemorations. The Eastern Church lectionary has distinctive features shared only by the Jerusalem lectionary. The lectionary system of the Eastern Church, which is more developed and appropriately organized, is more comprehensive but less convenient in terms of time.[286]

Although there were partial additions to the Gaza texts in the thirteenth century, after this period there was a further development due to the schism within the Eastern Church and the encounter with the Latin Church. Today, despite the standardization of the printing press, there are nine different editions of prayer books. Among these, the Joseph Kelayta edition is considered the most important example of the manuscript prayer tradition.[287] This prayer book is a true Taksa and contains prayers for the Eucharist and several other liturgical services. The Chaldean (Catholic) version of the Hudra reflects the editors' desire to avoid wording that could be interpreted as Nestorian.[288] The Hudra of the Eastern Church (Assyrian Church of the East) was printed by Thoma Darmo with the permission of Catholicos Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII (1908-1975).[289] This was the first edition of the liturgical formulation for the Assyrian Church of the East. The other two liturgical books, the Gazza (The Feasts of the Lord and the Sunday cycle

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[284] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 10-13.
[285] Sebastian P. Brock, "Liturgy", *GEDSH*, 249-250.
[286] Kannokadan, *The East Syrian Lectionary*, 129-155.
[287] Joseph Kelayta, *The liturgy of the Church of the East* (Mosul: 1928).
[288] P. Bedjan and J. Khayyatha (ed.), *Breviarium Iuxta Ritum Syrorum Orientalium id est Chaldaeorum*, 3 vols. (Paris: 1886-1887).
[289] Thoma Darmo (ed.), *Ktaba d "Aqdam wad "Batar wad "Hudra wad "Kashkol wad "Gaza wad "Aqale*

d "Udrana "am Ktaba d "Mazmore, in 3 vols. (Trichur: Mar Narsai Press, 1960-1961). See Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 6-8.

saints' commemorations that are not based on the saints' commemorations) and Kashkul (which includes morning, evening and nightly ceremonies for ordinary days, excluding all Sundays, festivals and commemorations) have been combined into one volume and are now all called Hudra.[290]

5. THE CHURCH CALENDAR AND THE FEASTS OF THE LORD (IEDE D "MARANAYE)

The Eastern Church uses the Julian calendar, also known as the Gregorian calendar, for its church calendar. The Julian calendar was used by all churches until the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in the seventeenth century. According to this calendar, the crucifixion of Christ always falls after the Jewish Passover. However, in the Western calendar, which is not fixed, Good Friday comes before the Jewish Passover some years. This is the main reason why some Eastern Churches oppose the Western Church calendar. According to the Julian calendar, Christmas is on January 7. January 7 falls on the twenty-fifth of the month called Kanon Kdim (Kanun-u Evvel) in Syriac. The date of Easter, however, changes every year. The same date repeats every 3 or 4 years. Easter in the Western Churches is in March and April, while Easter in the Eastern Churches is always in April or May. The difference between these dates is four weeks.[291] The Eastern Church liturgical calendar consists of eight cycles of a series of weeks called "sabo "e" (weeks). The Syriac East liturgical year, which according to the Julian calendar begins in October (Teşrin-i Evvel) and ends in September, is closely related to the liturgical reforms of Catholicos Isho "yab III, who reorganized the liturgical cycles and seasons and fixed their duration. According to him, the beginning of the liturgical year in October with the cycles of Moses and the consecration of the Church, and ending in September with the coming of the Antichrist and the appearance of the Messiah, which signifies the final end, is the most appropriate calendar to depict the whole history of salvation. Regarding the beginning of the liturgical year in October, he says the following: "When the seeds are sown in the ground

[290] Royel, "A Survey of the Christology of the Assyrian Church", 2, footnote 5.
[291] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 94-97.

and the beginning of winter, when the rain begins to fall, and the whole crop of the end of the year is the Mosaic [cycle]. This [cycle] consists of the four administrations of the desert, the judges, the king and the priests, and the Maccabees, from Moses to Christ."[292] The East Syriac liturgical year consists of the following cycles: 4+2 weeks of Annunciation and Nativity (Subbara and Yalda/Christmas), 7 weeks of Epiphany (Denha), 7 weeks of Great Fasting (Sauma Rabba/Lent), 7 weeks of Resurrection (Qeyamta/Easter), 7 weeks of the Apostles (Slihe/Apostles), 7 weeks of Summer (Qaita), 7 weeks of Elijah-Cross (Elia-Sliba), 7 weeks of Moses and 4 weeks of Consecration (Quddas "Edta). However, the dates of these cycles are often shortened due to Passover (Easter) and Nativity/Epiphany. For example, the Mosaic cycle is rarely more than 4 weeks long, and usually falls on only one Sunday. According to the Church, these cycles and the whole liturgical year reveal the history of salvation from the beginning of the world to its end, the second coming of Christ. Church worship is organized in chronological order from the time of the Annunciation (Subbara) to the time of the Consecration (Quddas "Edta).

Subbara and Yalda (Annunciation and Nativity): The liturgical year begins with the Subbara cycle. It consists of six weeks centered on the Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ (December 25). Of these, four Sundays fall before the Nativity and two Sundays after it. It is a period of preparation for the mystery of the Incarnation, and 25 days of fasting are observed during this period. It begins on the Sunday between November 27th (Teşrin-i Sani) and December 4th (Kanun-u Evvel) and ends on the Sunday before the Feast of the Epiphany. If December 1 falls on any day, such as Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, the previous Sunday becomes the first Sunday of the Annunciation. However, if December 1 falls on a Friday or Saturday, then the following Sunday is the first Sunday of the Announcement. The 4 Sundays of the Annunciation are preparatory and the other 2 Sundays are the extension of the Feast of Yalda. Between December 25th, the Nativity of Jesus (Yalda) and the next cycle

[292] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 13-14, footnote 80.

There are twelve days between Epiphany. In the time of Mar Efrem, the Nativity and Epiphany were celebrated together on January 6. The Friday after the Nativity is celebrated as the memorial day of James, the brother of Jesus Christ. If there are two Fridays between the Nativity (Yalda) and Epiphany (Denha), the second Friday is celebrated as a memorial to the Virgin Mary (Marth Maryam). However, if there is only one Friday, then this commemoration is celebrated on that Friday. The first Sunday after the Nativity commemorates the killing of innocent children and the visit of the magi. On the second Sunday, the virginity of the Virgin Mary is emphasized through Old Testament typologies. The first Sunday in the Annunciation cycle is related to the period from Adam to Noah; the second Sunday from Noah to Abraham; the third Sunday from Abraham to David; and the fourth Sunday from David to the appearance of the Messiah. Although the Feast of the Annunciation used to be held in April, the Church Fathers decided that it should be held in Canon Law (December). During the period of the Annunciation and Nativity, the daily prayers begin with the praises of Mary. This period mainly deals with the themes of the coming of the promised Messiah and the beginning of the new age of salvation.

Denha (Epiphany): The Epiphany cycle consists of the eight Sundays between the Feast of the Epiphany and Sauma Rabba (Great Lent). The Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated on January 6, immediately after the Feast of the Virgin Mary. The Epiphany period represents the three years and months from Christ's appearance (epiphany) to the perfection of His priesthood in the Gospel. The first Sunday of this period commemorates the killing of innocent children and the second Sunday commemorates Jesus' discourse in the Temple. It also commemorates Jesus' growth and development thirty years before his baptism. The week after Jesus' baptism is marked by the singing of hymns, canons and poems appropriate to the three years following the baptism. Baptismal week signifies renewal in Christ and salvation through him. This week marks the beginning of the liturgical cycle of the commemoration of saints. All Fridays of this

cycle are dedicated to the commemoration of saints. If nine Fridays fall within the Epiphany cycle, the church commemorates

celebrates Friday the 1st Commemoration of John the Baptist. Friday the 2nd Commemoration of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Friday the 3rd Commemoration of St. Stephen. Friday the 4th Commemoration of the Apostles. Friday 5. Friday Greek Doctors Memorial. Friday 6. Friday Commemoration of the Syriac Doctors. Friday 7th Commemoration of a special saint.

Friday the 8th commemoration of the Forty Martyrs and Friday the 9th commemoration of the Dead. This cycle focuses mainly on the themes of the divine manifestation of Christ and rebirth through the Holy Spirit.

Sauma Rabba (Great Fast): This period consists of eight weeks, including Holy Week. All Sundays and Fridays during this period, and all days of the first, middle and last week are days of celebration. The beginning of this cycle is the 50 days before Easter. The Great Fast covers the 40 days in this period, excluding Sundays, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Forty days are fasted in contrast to Christ's forty-day fast. The sixth Friday is called Lazarus Friday. During this period the church participates in Christ's Passover, suffering, death and resurrection, in song and in all the rituals. It is a period of purification and participation in the saving acts of Christ's suffering and death through prayer, fasting, penance, repentance and good works. This period focuses mainly on the themes of Christ as the revelation of God's Logos and new life in Christ.

Qeyamta wa Sulaqa (Resurrection and Ascension): This period consists of seven weeks from Palm Sunday until the Ascension of Jesus. The feasts of the Resurrection and Ascension are celebrated during this period. The mystery of the Resurrection is celebrated as a preliminary experience of participation in Christ's heavenly glory. There are forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension. Christ's ascension into heaven in the presence of the apostles shows that the resurrection is assured and that all good doers will likewise participate in the heavenly angelic realm, just as he did. Ten days after the ascension, hymns appropriate to the fiftieth day are sung. During this period, April 23rd of each year is celebrated as Mar Gewergis'

memorial day. If this day falls on Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday, it is moved to the Monday or Tuesday after these days.

is postponed. This cycle deals mainly with the themes of the glory of Christ and the beginning of the Messianic community.

Slihe (Apostles): This period is also known as the Apostles' Fast. It includes the seven weeks between the Sunday after the Ascension and the Feast of the Apostles. The first Sunday of the apostolic season is the Feast of Pentecost. The Day of Pentecost is celebrated as the mystery of the power of the Holy Spirit descending on the apostles. The seventh Sunday after Pentecost is called Nusardel and marks the end of the apostolic cycle. It also marks the beginning of the summer season. During the apostolic age, the apostles and their disciples were scattered all over the world to bring the message of the Gospel to all nations. On the fiftieth day of Christ's resurrection, the promise of the Holy Spirit, called the Paraclete, who descended on the apostles and empowered them to preach in different languages, is confessed. With Pentecost and the preaching of the apostles, the "Inauguration of the Church" began. The apostolic period is seen as a turning away from idols, a drawing near to God and a renewal through the Holy Spirit.

Qaita (Summer Cycle): The summer cycle consists of seven weeks and the most important festival is the fast of the 12 Apostles called Nusardel. This period is also known as "Hallelin". The Feast of Gilyana (manifestation) is celebrated during this period on August 6. It celebrates the mystery of the mystery of the growth of the Church through the work of the Apostles and the increase in the number of repentant people and their sacrifices and efforts. This period continues to be celebrated until the coming of the Antichrist. The Apostles spread all over the world, preaching Jesus, teaching the Gospel and baptizing people. The first week of the summer cycle, which begins with the commemoration of the Apostles, marks the time when the Church receives various gifts and instructions from the Apostles to achieve its goals. This period deals with the growth and expansion of the Church. It is also a time when the Church honors all those who spread the Gospel and endured all kinds of suffering for this cause.

commemorates their children. The Apostle Thomas, Mar Jacob of Nusaybin (1st Friday), Apostle Mar Mari (2nd Friday), Mar Shem "un bar Sabbai (6th Friday), Mar Qardagh (7th Friday) are commemorated during this period. The Apostolic and Summer cycles, which are closely related to each other, deal with the themes of the universal call to be a disciple of Jesus and the community of Christ guided by the Holy Spirit. Repentance is also a very important theme in this period.

Elijah-Sliba-Moses (Elijah-Cross-Moses): This cycle consists of eleven weeks, with the central celebration being the Feast of the Cross. The first three Sundays of this cycle before the Feast of the Cross are known as the Elijah cycle. The fourth Sunday through the seventh Sunday is recognized as the period of the Cross. The Feast of the Presentation of the Cross of the Lord is celebrated every year on September 13. The cycle of Elijah and the Cross is related to the coming of Elijah from heaven and the power of the Holy Cross. This cycle reminds us of the power of the Holy Cross at the second coming of Jesus Christ with Moses and Elijah, which is signified by the glorious appearance on Mount Tabor[293] . With the appearance of the Antichrist at the end of time, Elijah will come before the second coming of Christ to take up the cross of Christ, fight the Antichrist and destroy him. The time of the cross is symbolic of the appearance of Jesus Christ. After the appearance of the holy cross, Jesus will appear in all His glory. This period also signifies the divine judgment and the departure of the righteous to the heavenly kingdom and the wicked to hell. Although the Mosaic cycle theoretically consists of seven weeks, in practice it is no more than the four Sundays preceding the feast of the "Consecration of the Church". In this respect, this

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[293] Luke, 9/28-36: "About eight days after these words Jesus went up on the mountain to pray, taking with Him Peter, John and James. While Jesus was praying, the appearance of His face changed and His clothes became white and shining like lightning. At that moment two men appeared in glory and began to talk to Jesus. They were Moses and Elijah. They were talking about Jesus' departure, which would soon take place in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had fallen asleep. But when they were awake, they saw the glory of Jesus and two men standing beside Him. As they were leaving Jesus, Peter said to J e s u s , "Lord," he said, "it is good that we are here! Let's build three gazebos: One for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah! He didn't really realize what he was saying. As Peter was saying this, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them. When the cloud covered them, they were afraid. A voice from the cloud said,

"This is my Son, the chosen One. Listen to Him! When the voice stopped, they saw that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept it secret and told no one about what they had seen in those days".

The Sundays after the seventh week of the cycle, or the fourth Sunday of the cycle of the Cross, are called Moses Sundays. These Sundays consist of one, sometimes two, sometimes three Sundays after the Elijah cycle and before the "Consecration of the Church". These cycles mainly deal with the themes of the Kingdom of God and the Church of the redeemed community.

Quddas "Edta (Consecration of the Church): This period consists of four weeks and closes the liturgical year. The first Sunday is called "hudat "edta" (renewal of the Church). In this cycle there are four Sundays that carry the mystery of the end of this world. On these Sundays the church is praised and the glory and honor of Christ, the true bridegroom who clothes the bride, the church, is proclaimed. This period focuses mainly on the glorification of Christ, the Son of the living God, and of the Church, on His eschatological triumph and entry into the heavenly Jerusalem.[294]

In the Eastern Church there are seven feasts called "Iede d'Maranaye" (Feasts of the Lord). These are Yalda (Nativity/Christmas/Christmas/Christmas), Dinkha (Epiphany), Oshana (Palm Sunday), Piskha (Thursday before Easter), Qeyamta (Resurrection/Easter), Sulaqa (Ascension) and Gilyana (Transfiguration). Oshana and Qeyamta are always celebrated on Sundays, while the others rarely fall on a Sunday.[295] "Abdisho" states that the feasts and festivals attributed to the divine providence (mdabranutha), which includes the life and deeds of the Messiah, also have the sanctity of Sunday. Accordingly, they are celebrated by the church throughout the year in a continuous manner in order to ensure that the graces bestowed upon the creatures by the appearance of Christ do not fade away over time, are not lost in the depths of heresy, and their graces do not disappear.[296] Apart from these, it is also celebrated with Jesus Christ himself.

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[294] The following sources were used for the liturgical year of the Church: Kannokadan, *The East Syrian Lectionary: A Historical-Liturgical Study*, 30-60, 170-210; Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices*, 265-281; Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 15-24.

[295] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 92.
[296] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 27.

other non-related feasts are also celebrated, such as Pentecost, the Consecration of the Church and the Finding of the Cross. The days of commemoration generally fall on Fridays.[297]

6. DAILY PRAYERS (NAMAZAR/SLUTA)

IV. century, a general framework for daily worship emerged in both the East and the West. Accordingly, two forms of daily worship took shape: cathedral worship, in which bishops, priests, people and sometimes kings participated, and daily worship practiced by monks in monasteries.[298] The Eastern Church distinguished daily rituals, such as prayer or prayer at different times of the day, from the other liturgical rites of the church. There are different opinions about the character of the daily worship of the Eastern Church. There are those who argue that the daily prayers of the Assyrians of the East are largely of a church/cathedral character, and there are those who argue that all of their daily prayers, with the exception of night and evening prayers, are of monastic origin. While the use of the cathedral form of worship among the Assyrians of the East appears to have begun in the Catholicosate cathedral of Kokhe, the monastic tradition of daily prayers is found in the writings of two monasteries near Mosul (Upper Monastery and Beth "Abe).[299] The Eastern Church tradition does not use bells to gather people to church for worship. Instead of a church bell, a board called a "Naqusa", similar to the Greek Orthodox "Semantron", made of walnut wood, one inch thick, about a foot wide and two feet long, is used. The person who struck the board would strike it three times the first time, representing the Trinity.[300]

In the Eastern Church, as in all Eastern Churches, the day begins with sunset. According to the canons of the Eastern Church, daily worship for the faithful is divided into four times: Ramsa (Evening), Lelya (Night), Suba "a (Last Prayer of the Day) and Sapra

[297] Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 92-93.

[298] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 27-28; R. E. Maccarron, "East Syrian Liturgy", *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Second Edition*, 5/7.
[299] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 1-4.
[300] Ms. Surma, *Nineveh "s Plea*, trans. Meral Barış (Istanbul: Avesta Publications, 1996), 22.

(Morning). Of these, the evening and morning prayers are very important and their duration must be strictly observed. The other two are according to the monastic rule and there are no restrictions on lengthening or shortening them for lay people.[301] The religious service that begins just before sunset is called "Ramsa" (Evening Prayer). In the Ramsa, the relevant prayers are recited in makam by two different choirs, one for each day of each of the two weeks. After this, the congregation disperses and does not return to the church for the last prayer of the day, called "Suba "a". However, this ceremony has either been completely abandoned or is only practiced on the eve of Lent, the three days of the Nineveh Prayer, and some festivals, when it is combined with vespers. In the "Slota d-Lelya" (Night Prayer) service, the prayers called "Mowtbe" are recited. After this, the prayers called "Sahra" (praise) must begin at dawn. Then comes the most important prayer time called "Slota d-Sapra".[302] "Abdişo" relates the following about the daily prayers. According to him, the first ceremony is the "sahra" (praise) ceremony, which is performed at dawn by ordinary people other than the clergy. In this way, one saves oneself and strengthens oneself against hostile spirits who try to deceive people into sinning in the middle of the day. The angels also sang praises at the beginning of time when light was created. Therefore, the prayer of praise comes first. The second ceremony is the evening prayer, and the most appropriate time is just before sunset. Here they thank God for protecting them during the day and seek God's forgiveness for the mistakes and sins committed during the day. The third ceremony is called suba "a and is practiced by holy men who fast all day and eat only at night. However, it is practiced by ordinary people as a prayer before going to sleep. At this time all sins committed during the day must be remembered and forgiven by God. The fourth ceremony is that of the night worshippers. This is

[301] Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices*, xii.
[302] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 29; Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices*, xvi-xvii.

During this time, each believer makes use of this sacred practice according to his or her desire. Some pray on the first crow of the rooster, some on the second, some on the third. According to "Abdişo", in his time the common hour was the time when the entire congregation gathered in the church for divine worship.[303]

The canons of the Church permitted lay people to perform these ceremonies voluntarily in their daily occupations. However, the canons do not tolerate the prayers of dawn (sahra) and evening (ramsa) and require that they be continued without interruption. According to Eastern Church tradition, there are seven hours for prayer: (1) the ramsa prayer at 6 p.m. and, according to Iso "yab, at 3 p.m. (2) the suba "a prayer at 9 p.m. after the dinner service (3) the lelya prayer at 12 midnight (4) the so-called sahra prayer at 3 a.m. (5) the sapra prayer at 6 a.m. (6) the third hour prayer (terce) at 9 a.m. (7) the midday prayer (sext) at 12 midday. Bishops and monks try, as far as possible, to perform the prayers of these seven hours in the community. Clergy and lay people only pray the ramsa (evening prayer) and sapra (morning prayer) together. Terce and sext prayers are only practiced during the Great Fast (Sauma Rabba). The suba "a prayer after the evening meal is practiced during the three days of the Nineveh fast, the Great Fast and some commemorations and festivals. However, this practice of small hours disappeared from the IXth century onwards.[304] An important feature to note about the daily prayers of the Eastern Church is the absence of any lectionary from the Bible during these ceremonies. This deficiency was compensated for by the numerous lectionaries that were inserted into the liturgy.[305]

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[303] Badger, *The Nestorians and their Riuals*, 2/17.
[304] Jincy O. U., *Qulase d-Marth Maryam*, 31.
[305] Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices*, xxiii.

7. FASTING (SAUMA)

Fasting has been a very important practice for the Eastern Church since early times. Indeed, Afrahat says the following about fasting: "Pure fasting is precious in the sight of God. It is guarded like the treasure in heaven. It is a weapon against Satan and with it we meet the arrows of the enemy."[306] Apart from these statements, "Fasting should not be understood only as abstaining from eating and drinking. If fasting does not take the nafs away from evil deeds and thoughts, fasting is not real fasting."[307] He points out the importance of fasting. According to him, for the purpose of fasting to be realized, the soul and body must fast together.[308] With a similar approach, "Abdişo" evaluates fasting under the heading "Fasting, Prayer and Charity" and states that the essence of the virtues necessary for the attainment of the fear of God for those who believe in the Day of Judgment are three. These are fasting, prayer and mercy, provided that they are practiced only in the spirit of the Gospel. According to him, fasting is superior to all seclusion and prayer is superior to all deeds. Mercy is the striving to be like God. He divides fasting into external fasting, which is abstaining from food, and internal fasting, which is abstaining from evil. According to him, fasting is a factor that enables the rich to act out of compassion as a result of tasting the pain of hunger and thirst and feeling the suffering of the poor. Fasting sanctifies the senses, clarifies their power and makes them like angels. Prayer is a key to the treasures of God. According to him, prayer is a spiritual munajadah (conversation) and when a person prays, he speaks to God and when he reads the Bible, God speaks to him. Mercy, on the other hand, is a way for us to give what is dear and precious to us to heaven by giving it to those who are in need.

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[306] Efram al-Khuri Filipus, "al-Aswâmu "l-Fardiyya wa "l-Aswâmu "l-Ihtiyariyya fi Kevânini Keniseti "l-Mashrik", *Church of Beth Kokheh Journal*, (Accessed 05. 08. 2019), 1.

[307] Filipus, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 1.
[308] Filipus, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 1.

It is an opportunity to reveal our wisdom by sending it. It is an opportunity to be infinitely relieved and happy.[309]

The Eastern Church is distinguished from other churches by the multiplicity of fasts and the strict rules regarding fasting. According to the canons of the Church, there are two types of fasts: fasts that are obligatory for all believers and optional fasts that believers are free to observe. There are three obligatory fasts: Sauma Rabba (Great Fast), Wednesday and Friday fasts, and the fast of Nineveh (Bau "sa).

Sauma Rabba (Great Fast): This fast is considered the most important and fundamental fast. The canons of the Synod of Mar Isaac (410) contain various provisions regarding this fast. Accordingly, forty days of fasting are observed for seven weeks, followed by the celebration of the holy Easter. It is called Sauma Rabba, after Jesus Christ fasted for forty days in the desert while being tested by Satan. It is also called Khamsin (fifty) fast because of the fifty days of Lent, from Sunday of the first week until Easter, and Erbain fast because of the forty days of fasting. These forty days of fasting, the so-called days of affliction when Satan tried to tempt Christ, preceded his death and resurrection. The last day of this fast is the Thursday before Easter. However, the fasts on Good Friday and Holy Saturday are not included in the Sauma Rabba fast. The fasts on these two days are related to the ceremonies of those days. On Sundays, there is no fasting until the evening, as there is no fasting on Sundays due to the consumption of plant foods through the reception of communion in the morning Eucharist. Therefore, when the seven Sundays are subtracted from the seven weeks, forty days remain. (40 days of fasting

+ 7 Sundays + Elem Friday + Holy Saturday + Easter = 50 days). Although Church canons generally prohibit fasting on Sundays and Saturdays throughout the year, there is a separate commandment for Sundays and Saturdays in the Sauma Rabba cycle. Sunday

[309] Mar "Abdisho" al-Sobawi, *al-Jawhar*, 28.

and on Saturdays it is obligatory not to fast until vespers, provided that no animal food is consumed. The only exception is Holy Saturday before Easter in the Sauma Rabba cycle, when a full fast is observed. In the Eastern Church, the liturgical day is considered to begin with vespers, which is said at sunset. Accordingly, if one fasts on Saturday until evening, one enters Sunday fasting. Therefore, it is necessary to break the fast on Saturday until before the evening prayer. During the Sauma Rabba period, communion is not permitted except on Saturdays and Sundays. According to Church tradition, the days of the Sauma Rabba fast are seen as days of repentance and sorrow, so it is not appropriate to celebrate the Eucharist, which is considered a joyful act, on these days. Even the commemoration of martyrs can only be celebrated on Saturdays and Sundays if they fall during this period. According to the canons of the Church, the Eucharist should only be celebrated after sundown on the Thursday before Easter and on Holy Saturday in the Sauma Rabba period throughout the year. On the former, in commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ, the Eucharist takes place after the foot washing ceremony after sunset. In the second, on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter, it is forbidden to celebrate the Eucharist during the daytime because it coincides with the day Jesus Christ was in the tomb. However, since Saturday is considered to be Sunday after sunset, and Sunday is considered to be the day on which Jesus Christ rose from the dead, fasting is required until the deacon proclaims the gospel of the Gospel, "Christ is risen from the dead". Since the Eucharistic sacrifice is the body of Christ, the altar his tomb, the placing of the sacrifice on the altar his death and the blessing of the sacrifice his resurrection, the Eucharist is celebrated after the deacon's call and the Gospel reading. On both of these days, those who receive the sacrifice fast from midnight the night before and spend about twenty hours in fasting. In no other church do the faithful receive communion

There is no requirement for such a long period of strict fasting without drinking a drop of water. This practice is strictly observed. The offering of sacrifices is forbidden on Holy Saturday morning and on Passion Friday. The Church places great emphasis on receiving communion at the end of the Sauma Rabba fast and then breaking the fast. During Sauma Rabba, the celebration of the martyrs' birthdays is not permitted, while the commemoration of martyrs is permitted only on Sundays and Saturdays. Weddings and birthday celebrations are also not permitted during this period. According to tradition, candidates for baptism were initiated into the catechumenate at the beginning of the Sauma Rabba fast and were baptized on the night of Holy Saturday through Sunday. After the second week of the Sauma Rabba fast, candidates for baptism were not accepted.[310]

Wednesday and Friday fasts: The Eastern Church obliges all believers to fast on Fridays and Wednesdays throughout the year. On these two days the Eucharist is celebrated in the morning. However, during the Sauma Rabba period, there is no Eucharist on these two days. Church tradition gives many reasons for fasting on these two days. Accordingly, it is necessary to fast on Wednesday and Friday in contrast to the fasting of the Jews on Tuesday and Thursday. Likewise, the court's decision to arrest Jesus Christ on Wednesday and his crucifixion on Friday were also seen as a reason for fasting on these days. When fasting on these days, only meat is not consumed. Other animal products may be consumed. The fast on these days is observed during the day and ends at dawn. If the feasts of the Lord (feasts of Jesus Christ) fall on Wednesdays and Fridays, the custom is not to fast on these days. Clergy who do not eat meat or drink wine on these days are demoted one grade.[311]

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[310] Philip, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 3-6; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 111-112.
[311] Filipus, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 6-8.

Nineveh Fast (Bau "sa d "Ninwaye): This fast is highly valued by the Eastern Church tradition. Bau "sa literally means request, supplication, and petition. This fast was instituted for two reasons. First, it is associated with the fast of the people of Nineveh (Mosul) during the time of the prophet Jonah. Secondly, as a result of the prayers and supplications for the removal of the plague that affected Mosul and its surroundings at the end of the VI century, a three-day fast was observed in memory of the removal of this disease. Hazqiel I (570-581), who was the Catholicos during this period, made this practice a current practice for all regions. It is observed on the three days from Monday to Wednesday, three weeks before the beginning of the Sauma Rabba period.[312]

Non-obligatory Fasts: Non-obligatory fasts are mentioned in the canons and liturgical books.

Lenten fasts mentioned in the Church Canons:

Subbara (Announcement) or Yalda (Nativity/Christmas) Fast: A 25-day fast that lasts from the beginning of the Subbara period until Christmas.

Sliha (Apostles) Fast: It begins on the Monday after Pentecost and continues until the Feast of the Apostles, the beginning of the Summer season. It covers a period of forty days.

Moses Fast: According to the canons of the Church, this fast begins at the beginning of the liturgical year. The Church has established the fast of Moses as the first fast of the liturgical year. It is followed by the fast of Sauma Rabba, the fast of the Apostles and finally the fast of Elijah.

The Fast of Elijah or the Cross: This fast begins with the beginning of the Elijah cycle and continues until the seventh Friday of the same cycle. The fourth Friday of this period is known as the Feast of the Cross. This fast, which covers a period of forty days, is only

[312] Philip, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 8-10; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 111.

It is liturgical in the Nestorian Church and is associated with the Feast of the Holy Cross. It falls at the end of the liturgical year.[313]

Fasts Mentioned in the Liturgical Books:

Fast of the Virgin Mary: This fast begins on the first Monday after the feast of Epiphany and lasts for three days.

Fast of the Assumption of Mary: This fast is observed on the fifteen days preceding the feast of the Assumption of Mary, which is celebrated every year on August 15th.

Mar Zeya Fast: It begins on the Monday following the second Sunday after the Feast of Yalda (Nativity) and lasts for three days. Apart from these, there are local fasts related to saints such as Mar Kuryakos, Mar Gewargis, Mar Daniel, etc. The fasts mentioned above are not obligatory neither for the clergy nor for the lay people. However, there are commands for clergy to observe the fast of the Apostles and Elijah, and they are encouraged to observe the fast of Subbara instead of the fast of Moses. There is no commandment for the common people.[314]

Those fasting on non-Sunday Eucharist may continue fasting after eating the Eucharistic sacrifice, provided it is a non-Sunday Eucharist. However, one should never continue fasting after the Sunday Eucharist. This applies to all fasts except the fast of Sauma Rabba. The exception is the fast of Sauma Rabba on Saturday in addition to Sunday. For those who are unable to fast due to illness, weakness or old age, there is nothing wrong with not fasting the obligatory fasts. However, they should fast when they are able to fast. If possible, they should fast twice as much for those days, but this rule is almost never observed. The Church recommends long or short fasts and prayers for repentance for those who have sinned. If the sin is confessed, repented of, repented of and turned away from

[313] Filipus, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 10-11.
[314] Filipus, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 11.

It is permitted to join the congregation and to take a sacrifice. It is forbidden to drink wine while fasting, especially during the fast of Sauma Rabba. It is also forbidden to drink wine on Saturday, as it is a prelude to Sunday. Regarding what can and cannot be eaten while fasting, the canon says the following: "Fast, then, on the days of Easter, from Monday to Saturday. During these six days of fasting, use bread, salt and pulses for food and water for drinking. Abstain from meat and drink on these days. For these are days of sorrow and not festivals."[315] As can be understood from these statements, animal foods are not allowed to be consumed while fasting, while plant foods are allowed. Another canon states, "During the entire Sauma Rabba period, fasting should be observed and nothing but plant foods should be consumed."[316] In this case, in the Eastern Church, food is abstained from until the evening and only plant foods are consumed in the evening. However, it should be emphasized that this is only in relation to obligatory and true fasts. This is because true fasting (especially the Sauma Rabba and Nineveh fasts) requires a single meal of plant foods per day as deemed appropriate. In the three-day fast in honor of Nineveh, the fasting person does not receive a drop of water or food until after the Eucharist, which takes place in the afternoon and evening. During the Sauma Rabba period, the Eucharist was traditionally held in the afternoon. Today, however, this tradition has disappeared as the Eucharist is celebrated in the morning. On Wednesdays and Fridays during the year, only meat abstinence is required. The other fasts are not full-day fasts, and the fasting person may eat as long as they abstain from meat, fish, milk, eggs, butter and other nutritious foods. Vegetables and rice are permitted. The Church punishes those who do not observe the obligatory fasts without a valid reason.

[315] Filipus, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 13.
[316] Filipus, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 13.

imposes sanctions. If he is a cleric, he is either dismissed or demoted by one degree. If he is a layman, then he is ostracized from the community.[317]

8. PILGRIMAGES AND HAJJ

The importance and meaning of pilgrimage in the New Testament is not very clear. It is known that the early Christians visited the temple in Jerusalem, as in Judaism. The influence of Constantine I, rather than religious obligation, played an important role in the development of pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The construction of churches in various parts of Jerusalem encouraged many Christians to visit the places where Jesus Christ was believed to have been born, lived and crucified. In addition to the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, visiting shrines, monks living in monasteries, and churches built over the graves of saints and martyrs began to be considered pilgrimages.[318] All Christian Syriac traditions attach great importance to Jerusalem, the birthplace of Christianity and the main destination of pilgrimage. Along with visitors and pilgrims from all over the Christian world, Syriac Christians began to visit Jerusalem on pilgrimage or to live there for some time before the IVth or early Vth century. There is ample evidence that both East and West Syriacs visited Jerusalem on pilgrimage for centuries.[319]

It is known that from the beginning of the IVth century, the holy relics of martyrs and saints were collected and protected in martyrdoms. It is known that Mar Yahbalaha III (d. 1317) and Rabban Savma left China around 1275 and set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but were unable to do so due to security concerns. These two are reported to have visited many holy churches, monasteries and shrines in North and South Mesopotamia.[320] Among the holy places visited in the Eastern Church outside the Jerusalem region was Deir, where Mar Mari's tomb is located.

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[317] Philip, "al-Aswām al-Fardiyya", 12-13; Mar Aprem, *Sacraments of the Church of the East*, 110-111.
[318] Ömer Faruk Harman, "Hajj", DIA (Istanbul: TDV Publications, 1996), 14/384.
[319] George A. Kiraz - Lucas Van Rompay, "Jerusalem", *GEDSH*, 227-228. From the late IXth century, the Eastern Church established a bishopric for Damascus, Jerusalem and the coastal areas. However, the

Eastern Church's presence in Jerusalem ended in the eighteenth or possibly early nineteenth century. [320] For more information, see Budge, *The Monks of Kūblâi Khān*.

Koni (Qoni) and the Kokhe Cathedral in Ktesifon-Seleucia, which was used for a long time as a patriarchal seat and later as a place where catholicos were consecrated, occupy an important place. Churches and monasteries with relics of important church fathers, catholicos, monks and saints were also visited. It should also be noted that the shrine of the prophet Nahum near Elkos is an important pilgrimage center for Christians and Jews in the region.[321]

[321] Lucas Van Rompay, "Judaism, Syriac contacts with", *GEDSH*, 232-234.

CONCLUSION

From early on, the Eastern Church took root outside the Roman Empire in the Iranian area east of the Euphrates. It was officially recognized by the Sassanids and allowed to organize like the church in the West and to convene various synods (410, 420, 424). During this period, the church hierarchy was completed and the bishop of Seleucia/Ktesiphon was recognized as the highest authority of the church and became a completely independent church. In these synods, the decisions of the Council of Nicaea (325) and some synods previously held in the West were officially accepted, and thus the Greco-Roman understanding of Christianity began to have an impact on the Eastern Church. However, since it was understood that the involvement of the Roman Empire and the western fathers in the internal affairs of the Eastern Church would put them in a difficult situation before the Sassanid rule, it was decided at the Council of Dadişo (424) to act away from the tutelage of the western fathers and it was stated that the Eastern Church had an apostolic origin just like its counterparts in the West. When the data obtained in our study are evaluated, it is revealed that the Eastern Church completed the church hierarchy with its religious institutionalization and was formed as an independent church before it was known as Nestorius or Nestorius.

In early Syriac literature, the images of clothing used in relation to the human nature and body of Jesus Christ, and the various images based on the idea of the elevation of the human nature of Jesus Christ as a guarantee for the salvation of humanity, reflect the diophysite character of this tradition and its close relationship with salvation. Although these images have their roots in Judaism, they have undergone a significant development in Syriac translations of the Old Testament and the New Testament. This reveals that the diophysite character is deeply rooted in the Syriac tradition and that the role of the human nature of Jesus Christ for salvation is highly valued. Mopsuestian Church of the East

Theodore's readiness to accept the diophysite views can be attributed to the common diophysite tradition between the Syriac tradition and the School of Antioch. In accordance with the early Syriac tradition and the Antiochian schismatic background, the Church of the East, through its understanding of salvation (soteriology) based on the preservation of the transcendence of divinity, the supremacy of the divine dimension in Christ, and the absolute existence of Christ's human nature, has carried a diophysite character. In this respect, the parallels between the Eastern Church tradition and the Antiochian diophysite understanding identified in our study seem to have been effective in the positioning of the Eastern Church against the Alexandrian monophysite tradition and on the side of the Antiochian diophysite tradition during the christological debates.

One of the most important issues in the studies on the Nestorian Church is to reveal the extent of Nestorius' relationship with the church. The synods convened within the Eastern Church from 484 to 612 adopted the classical crystallology of the Antiochian tradition. In these synods, the Eastern Church insistently referred to Theodore of Mopsuestia, recognized him as the greatest master and guide, and cherished his biblical interpretations and christological views. During all these developments, Theodore of Mopsuestia was not much on the agenda in the West, while Nestorius, who was constantly kept on the agenda and excommunicated at every opportunity, was almost unknown in the East and his name was not mentioned even once in synods. The Eastern Church perceived Nestorius as a symbol who was victimized by Cyril's intrigues and suffered for the oppressed Antiochian cause. Although the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia were translated into Syriac early on, Nestorius' work was translated into Syriac only in 540, nearly a hundred years after his death. The most important distinction attributed to him in the Eastern Church is the allocation to him of one of the three liturgical modes (anaphora), two of which were attributed to Adday-Mari and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Nestorius' name appears several times in the Hudra and other liturgical books. Monophysite and Greco-Roman

Although the churches considered Nestorius' Christology to be central to the Eastern Church, it seems that the Eastern Church did not have a solid knowledge of his views until at least 540. It was only after this date that Nestorius' view of the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ as two prosopons and two hypostases corresponding to each of them reached the Eastern Church. This view of Nestorius seems to have had an indirect but very important influence on the two-hypostasis (knoma) formula of Christology, which was officially adopted at the 612 Synod of Bishops, and which marked the distinctive character of the Eastern Church. In this respect, our hypothesis that Nestorius had a limited influence on the Eastern Church's view of Christology cannot be fully confirmed. Although our study concludes that Nestorius had a significant influence on the Eastern Church's two-hypostasis formula of Christology, it is evident that he did not have a significant influence on the formation of views regarding the position of Mary. Although the debates about Mary flared up with Nestorius' use of the title Christotokos (Christ-bearer), it is understood that before Nestorius, both in the Syriac tradition and in the Antiochian tradition, the expression Theotokos (God-bearer) was rejected due to the concern that it might ignore the humanity of Christ and a widespread opinion was formed in favor of using the expression Christotokos.

Our study reveals that the differences of opinion between the diophysite and monophysite understanding of the Eastern Church are based on socio-political reasons, as well as on the historical, cultural, hermeneutical and philosophical background of the parties, and not simply on the fact that they express the same concepts with different terminology. The disagreement between the two sides is mainly based on deep disagreements about how the God Logos and the human Jesus, or in other words, the divine substance and the human substance, are united, the result of this union, and its implications for their understanding of salvation. However, the Greco-Roman

When the dispute between the churches and the Church of the East is considered in the cryptological context, it is understood that the dispute between the parties mainly stems from the different meanings attributed to the term hypostasis. For the Greco-Roman churches, which used the term hypostasis in the sense of person, the expression two hypostasis in the Eastern Church's formula of Christology was understood as a Christology with two persons in Christ. However, considering that the Eastern Church officially formulated its Christology as two natures in one person of Jesus Christ until 612 and never used the term hypostasis in the Christological formula, it is seen that it actually has a view quite close to the Greco-Roman diophysite understanding. The results of the study confirm that the dispute between the two sides was not mainly based on theological understanding, but on political disputes. Considering the position of the Monophysites in the eastern regions of the Roman Empire for the border security of the country, the rulers, who aimed to realize religious and political unity in the country, felt the need to reconcile the supporters of the Council of Chalcedon and the Monophysites, since their dismissal caused a great political cost for the state. In order to achieve this goal, the Antiochian diophysite understanding, which had no political cost and lacked social support within the borders of the country, was deliberately chosen. Nestorius was a figure that the Roman emperors, who were in favor of the Council of Chalcedon, constantly chose as a sacrifice to appease the people who adopted the monophysite view. Thus, by condemning Nestorius and the prominent figures of the Antiochian diophysite understanding, an affinity with the Monophysites was tried to be established.

The most important feature of the peculiar historical development of the Eastern Church is that it has lived under foreign domination throughout history. Normally, one might think that their lack of a Christian patron would have had many negative consequences for them. However, the data obtained in this study shows that this was not the case at all.

This situation has served a positive function for the Eastern Church in terms of preserving and developing its own uniqueness. The phenomenon of preserving its existence under a foreign rule gave the Eastern Church the ability to grasp the sensitivities of the political power and the social fabric they lived under and to find practical solutions. In the political rivalry of both the Sassanids and the Muslims with the Roman/Byzantine Empire, it is understood that being in conflict with the dominant understanding of Christianity in the Roman Empire provided many advantages for the Eastern Church. Compared to the Monophysites who lived under a Christian government such as the Roman Empire, the Eastern Church's successful missionary activities since the early period and the significant progress it made in spreading Christianity both in Iran and in Asia and India since the Sassanid period, and the fact that the spiritual jurisdiction of the catholicos of the Eastern Church covers a wider area than any other church hierarchy clearly reveal this situation. In this respect, it is possible to say that the fact that the Eastern Church was located outside the borders of the Roman Empire, had a unique ecclesiastical hierarchy, and continued its development under the rule of non-Christian governments had a positive impact on the preservation and development of its unique ecclesiastical structure and doctrine.

The Eastern Church accepts the ecumenical councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381) and relies on their statements of faith. The Church tradition explained the doctrine of the Trinity within the framework of the Cappadocian Fathers' understanding of "one essence/ousia and three hypostasis". Due to the inadequacy of the theological and metaphysical system of the Cappadocian Fathers in the Islamic period, the categories of divine attributes, which were an important part of the Islamic debates of the period, were used and the elements of trinity were tried to be justified in the context of attributes. In synods before the year 612, the Eastern Church had adopted the classical diophysite Antiochian theology of two natures (kyana) in the one person of Jesus Christ (parchopa).

They reflected his Christology. However, at the Synod of Bishops in 612, the formula of the two hypostases, "two kyana and two hypostases" in the one person of Jesus Christ (parchopa) was officially adopted. With the formula of two hypostases, the theologians of this church wanted to demonstrate the unity of the divine and human natures of Christ in his one person, and the preservation of the two natures in this unity without their mixing or destroying each other. As a result of this understanding, he preferred the title "Christotokos" (Christ-bearer) instead of the title "Theotokos" (God-bearer) that other churches used for Mary.

According to the Eastern Church, sin is not an essential characteristic of human nature, but a consequence of human free will. The Church's understanding of original sin and free will is shaped by the pedagogical and soteriological perspective inherent in the Antiochene School's literal and historical reading of scripture. The human nature of Christ, which has a full human nature consisting of a body and a rational soul, has free will like all other human beings. Just as the voluntary union of Christ's human nature with the God Logos in a prosopon by his free will gave his human nature the honor of the Son of God, so can human beings attain immortality in the kingdom of heaven by imitating the experience of Christ's human nature by their free will. The disregard of human free will and the emphasis on divine grace and mercy alone is rejected.

In the Eastern Church, speculative information about the end of the world and the stages of the afterlife, such as the resurrection, the second coming of Christ, divine judgment, etc., is transmitted and there is no clear dogmatic teaching. It seems that the view that there is a purification process after death was widely accepted among the Church Fathers. This reveals that there is an understanding of purgatory. According to the generally accepted view in the Eastern Church, hell is eternal just as heaven is eternal. However, neither do they formulate a clear dogma about purgatory like the Catholics.

nor has it adopted the Protestant dogma that once a person is saved, he is saved for all time. The Church leaves this matter a mystery.

Today, although paintings and icons are not used in the churches of the Eastern Church tradition, there is ample evidence of the existence of paintings and veneration of icons in various texts on theology and history written within the Eastern Church up to the XIVth century. However, it should be emphasized that the cult of images and icons in the Eastern Church tradition was not as strong as in the Byzantine churches.

According to the tradition of the Eastern Church, the sacrament is the depiction of the invisible and inexpressible through signs and symbols. It not only points to what is behind it, but also performs what it symbolizes. The sacraments are seen as the means by which God's grace is distributed to the baptized faithful and leads to the heavenly kingdom. Priestly consecration is considered the most important sacrament, without which the other sacraments cannot be performed. The Eastern Church continues the early Christian practice of combining the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and eucharist. Immersion in the waters of baptism and infant baptism is a distinctive feature of the Eastern Church. Church tradition sees the sacrament of the Eucharist as a religious service offered by those on earth to those in heaven through the material elements in the hope of forgiveness of sins and answers to prayers. There is a close connection between what happens during the Incarnation and what happens in the Eucharist. The sacrament of absolution and repentance is not only a secret confession of sins to the priest, but also a general confession of sins, and those who have committed grave sins are asked to repent by publicly confessing them in the presence of the faithful in the church. The holy oil and the holy sacrament, unique only to the Eastern Church.

The sacraments of maya (malka) are associated with the sacraments of baptism and eucharist, which are the basic rites of initiation. Accordingly, the holy oil completes, confirms and perfects the sacrament of baptism and the holy yeast completes, confirms and perfects the sacrament of the Eucharist. The main liturgy of the Eastern Church is the Mar Addai and Mar Mari liturgy, attributed to the apostles of the East, Mar Addai and Mar Mari. This liturgy is estimated to have been composed in Syriac between the IInd and IVth centuries, and its most striking feature is its lack of words of institution or narrative of institution. Another striking feature is the prominence of the second person of the Trinity (Christ) in the Eucharistic prayer. The anaphora in this liturgy retains traces of apostolic reflections with a structure similar to the Jewish "Birkat Hamazon" prayer.

The Eastern Church uses the Julian calendar for its church calendar, which consists of eight cycles of a series of weeks called "sabo "e" (weeks). The church calendar begins in October and ends in September. According to the Church, the liturgical year reveals the history of salvation from the beginning of the world to its end, the second coming of Christ. The Eastern Church distinguishes daily rituals, such as prayer or prayer at different times of the day, from the other liturgical rites of the church. It is understood that the church's daily prayers are largely of a church/cathedral character and that, except for the night and evening prayers, all other daily prayers are of monastic origin. Fasting has been a very important practice for the Eastern Church since early times. The Eastern Church is distinguished from other churches by the large number of fasts and strict rules regarding fasting.

This study, which aims to reveal the historical development of the Eastern Church and the stages through which its basic beliefs and practices were formed, is unique in that it makes use of the tradition of the Eastern Church, synod decisions and the works of many theologians belonging to this tradition. The Judeo-Christian character of the early Syriac tradition and the originality of ascetic tendencies

This is a new finding from our point of view. We hope that this study will pave the way for new scientific studies on Nestorians.

SOURCE

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KAPLAN, Yaşar, Teşekkül Süreci "nin Nesturi Kilisesi "nin Temel İnanç ve Uygulamalarının Teşekkül Süreci (VI-XIII. Centuries), PhD thesis, Advisor. Prof. Dr. Ahmet Hikmet Eroğlu, 551 pp.

SUMMARY

There have been many conflicts within Christianity and many sects have emerged as a result. One of these sects is the Nestorian (Eastern) Church. Considered to be one of the oldest churches, this church originated outside the borders of the Roman Empire. It had its own church hierarchy and continued its existence under the rule of non-Christian governments. This situation gives clues about the unique historical development and doctrine of this church. This thesis titled "The Formation Process of the Basic Beliefs and Practices of the Nestorian Church (6-13 Centuries)" consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusion and bibliography.

The first chapter deals with the spread of Christianity in the eastern regions of the Euphrates, the formation of the church hierarchy, the emergence of the Nestorian Church as a distinct church, and its historical development under Parthian, Sassanid, Muslim and Mongol rule. This chapter is limited to the period from the 6th century, when the Nestorian Church gained its independence and distinctive denominational characteristics, to the 13th century, when it completed its development. The second section examines the basic theological beliefs of the Nestorian Church, such as theology, Christology, Mariology, creation and the afterlife, and the development of these beliefs. The third part deals with the religious practices of the church, such as sacraments, liturgy, church structure and worship.

Key Concepts: Christianity, Eastern Church, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, Diophysite, Christology, Mary.

KAPLAN, Yaşar, The Process of Establishment of the Basic Beliefs and Practices of the Nestorian Church (6-13 Centuries), Ph.D., Advisor: Prof. Dr. Ahmet Hikmet Eroğlu, 551 p.

ABSTRACT

There have been many disputes in Christianity and many denominations have emerged. One of these denominations is the Church of the East (Nestorian Church). This dissertation discusses a subject "The Process of Establishment of the Basic Beliefs and Practices of the Nestorian Church (6-13 Centuries)". This dissertation consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusion and bibliography.

In the first chapter aims to elucidate the spread of Christianity in the eastern regions of the Euphrates, the formation of church hierarchy, to appear of the Nestorian Church independently and its historical process under the Parthian, Sassanid, Muslim and Mongolian governments. This chapter is limited to the time period from the 6th century when the Nestorian Church gained its independence and distinctive sectarian features to the 13th century when it completed its development. This chapter is limited to the period from the 6th century, when the Nestorian Church gained its independence and distinctive sectarian features to the 13th century, when it completed its development. In the second part, the basic tenets of the Nestorian Church such as theology, Christology, Mariology, creation and afterdeath and the processes that these beliefs have gone through are analyzed. Ultimately, in the third chapter this study deals with religious practices such as Sacraments of the Church, religious liturgy, church structure and worship.

Keywords: Christianity, The Church of the East, Thedore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, Dyophysite, Christology, Mary.